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HALLAM SUCCESSION.

A TALE OF METHODIST LIFE IN
TWO COUNTRIES.

BY



AMELIA E. BARR.



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TO
MY DEAR FRIEND,
SAM. EARNSHAW WILSON, ESQ.,
THIS TALE
IS, WITH AFFECTIONATE ESTEEM,
INSCRIBED.

331856

PREFACE.

FOR young Methodists in all places and circumstances, I have written this tale: first, to assist them in giving a reason for the faith that is in them; second, to show that they have good cause to love and honor a creed, which not only elevates the most lowly characters, but also adds to gentle birth, wide culture, and noble enthusiasms, beauty, dignity, and grace.

A. E. BARR.

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THE HALLAM SUCCESSION.

CHAPTER I.

“The changing guests, each in a different mood,
Sit at the road-side table and arise :
And every life among them in likewise
Is a soul's board set daily with new food.

“May not this ancient room thou sitt'st in dwell
In separate living souls for joy or pain ?
Nay, all its corners may be painted plain
Where Heaven shows pictures of some life well-spent.”

YORKSHIRE is the epitome of England. Whatever is excellent in the whole land is found there. The men are sturdy, shrewd, and stalwart; hard-headed and hard-fisted, and have notably done their work in every era of English history. They are also a handsome race, the finest specimens extant of the pure Anglo-Saxon, and they still preserve the imposing stature and the bright blonde characteristics of the race.

Yorkshire abounds in what is the typical English home—fine old halls and granges, set in wooded parks, and surrounded by sweet, shady gardens. One of the fairest of these homes is Hallam-Croft. There

may be larger halls in the West Riding, but none that combines so finely all the charms of antiquity, with every modern grace and comfort. Its walls are of gray stone, covered with ivy, or crusted with golden lichens; its front, long and low, is picturesquely diversified with oriel windows, gable ends, and shadowy angles. Behind is a steep, craggy range of woody hills; in front, a terraced garden of great extent; full of old-fashioned bowers, and labyrinth-like walks, and sloping down to a noble park, whose oaks and beeches are of wonderful beauty, and whose turf is soft as velvet and greener than any artist ever dreamed of.

Fifty years ago the owner of this lovely spot was Squire Henry Hallam. He was about sixty years of age, stout and fair, and dressed in fine drab broadcloth, with a white vest, and a white cambric kerchief tied loosely round his neck. His hat, drab also, was low-crowned and broad-brimmed, and, as a general rule, he kept it on. In the holy precincts of a church, or if the national anthem was played, he indeed always bared his head; but, in the first case, it was his expression of a religious sentiment, in the second he saluted his country, and, in a measure, himself.

One evening in the early spring he was sitting upon a low sofa in the room that was specially his own, mending some fishing tackle. A couple of setter puppies were worrying each other on the sofa beside him, and a splendid fox-hound leaned her

muzzle on one of his broad knees, and looked up into her master's face with sad reproachful eyes. She was evidently jealous, and watching anxiously for some look or word of favor. She had not long to wait. The puppies became troublesome; he chided them, and put the bit of leather they were quarreling about in his pocket. Then he patted the hound, and said: "There's a deal o' difference between them and thee, Fanny, and it's a' in thy favor, lass;" and Fanny understood the compliment, for she whimpered happily, and thrust her handsome head up against her master's breast.

At that moment his daughter, Elizabeth, entered the room. She had an open letter in her hand, and a look half-perplexed and half-pleased upon her face. "Father," she said, "there is a letter from America; Richard and Phyllis are coming; and I am afraid I shall not know how to make them happy."

"Don't thee meet troubles half way; they arn't worth th' compliment. What is ta feared for, dearie?"

"Their life is so different from ours—and, father, I do believe they are Methodists."

The squire fastened the bit of gaudy feather to the trout "fly" he was making, before he answered. "Surely to goodness, they'll niver be that! Sibbald Hallam, my uncle, was a varry thick Churchman when he went to th' Carolinas—but he married a foreigner; she had plenty o' brass, and acres o' land,

but I niver heard tell owt o' her religion. They had four lads and lasses, but only one o' them lived to wed; and that was my cousin, Matilda Hallam—t' mother o' these two youngsters that are speaking o' coming here."

"Who did she marry, father?"

"Nay, I knowt o' th' man she married. He was a Colonel Fontaine. I was thinking a deal more o' my own wedding than o' hers at that time. It's like enough he were a Methodist. T' Carolinas hed rebelled against English government, and it's nobbut reasonable to suppose t' English Church would be as little to their liking. But they're Hallams, whatever else they be, Elizabeth, and t' best I hev is for them."

He had risen as he spoke; the puppies were barking and gamboling at his feet, and Fanny watching his face with dignified eagerness. They knew he was going to walk, and were asking to go with him. "Be still wi' you, Rattle and Tory!—Yes, yes, Fanny!—and Elizabeth, open up t' varry best rooms, and give them a right hearty welcome. Where's Antony?"

"Somewhere in the house."

"Hedn't ta better ask him what to do? He knows ivery thing."

There was a touch of sarcasm in the voice, but Elizabeth was too much occupied to notice it; and as the squire and his dogs took the road to the park, she turned, with the letter still open in her hand, and went thoughtfully from room to room, seeking her

brother. There was no deeper motive in her thought than what was apparent; her cares were simply those of hospitality. But when a life has been bounded by household hopes and anxieties, they assume an undue importance, and since her mother's death, two years previously, there had been no company at Hallam. This was to be Elizabeth's first effort of active hospitality.

She found Antony in the library reading "The Gentleman's Magazine," or, perhaps, using it for a sedative; for he was either half asleep, or lost in thought. He moved a little petulantly when his sister spoke. One saw at a glance that he had inherited his father's fine physique and presence, but not his father's calm, clear nature. His eyes were restless, his expression preoccupied, his manner haughty. Neither was his voice quite pleasant. There are human instruments, which always seem to have a false note, and Antony's had this peculiarity.

"Antony, I have a letter from Richard and Phyllis Fontaine. They are going to visit us this summer."

"I am delighted. Life is dreadfully dull here, with nothing to do."

"Come to the parlor, and I will give you a cup of tea, and read you cousin Phyllis's letter."

The squire had never thought of asking Elizabeth why she supposed her cousins to be Methodists. Antony seized at once upon the point in the letter which regarded it.

"They are sailing with Bishop Elliott, and will remain until September, in order to allow the Bishop to attend Conference; what does that mean, Elizabeth?"

"I suppose it means they are Methodists."

The young man was silent a moment, and then he replied, emphatically, "I am very glad of it."

"How can you say so, Antony? And there is the rector, and the Elthams—"

"I was thinking of the Hallams. After a thousand years of stagnation one ought to welcome a ripple of life. A Methodist isn't asleep. I have often felt inclined to drop into their chapel as I passed it. I wonder how it would feel to be awake soul and body at once!"

"Antony, you ought not to talk so recklessly. Some people might imagine you meant what you said. You know very well that the thousand years of 'stagnation,' as you call it, of the Hallams, is a most respectable thing."

"Very respectable indeed! That is all women think about—born conservatives every one of them—'dyed in the wool,' as a Bradford man would say."

"Why do you quote what Bradford men say? I cannot imagine what makes you go among a crowd of weavers, when you might be at Eltham Castle with gentlemen."

"I will tell you why. At Eltham we yawn and stagnate together. The weavers prick and pinch me

in a thousand places. They make me dream of living."

"Drink your tea, Antony and don't be foolish."

He shrugged his shoulders and laughed. Upon the whole, he rather liked the look of astonishment in his sister's gray eyes, and the air of puzzled disapproval in her manner. He regarded ignorance on a great many matters as the natural and admirable condition of womanhood.

"It is very good tea, Elizabeth, and I like this American news. I shall not go to the Tyrol now. Two new specimens of humanity to study are better than glaciers."

"Antony, do remember that you are speaking of your own cousins—'two new specimens of humanity'—they are Hallams at the root."

"I meant no disrespect; but I am naturally a little excited at the idea of American Hallams—Americans in Hallam-Croft! I only hope the shades of Hengist and Horsa wont haunt the old rooms out of simple curiosity. When are they to be here?"

"They will be in Liverpool about the end of May. You have two weeks to prepare yourself, Antony."

Antony did not reply, but just what kind of a young lady his cousin Phyllis Fontaine might be he had no idea. People could not in those days buy their pictures by the dozen, and distribute them, so that Antony's imagination, in this direction, had the field entirely to itself. His fancy painted her in

many charming forms, and yet he was never able to invest her with any other distinguishing traits than those with which he was familiar—the brilliant blonde beauty and resplendent health of his countrywomen.

Therefore, when the real Phyllis Fontaine met his vision she was a revelation to him. It was in the afternoon of the last day of May, and Hallam seemed to have put on a more radiant beauty for the occasion. The sun was so bright, the park so green, the garden so sweet and balmy. Heart's-ease were every-where, honeysuckles filled the air, and in the wood behind, the blackbirds whistled, and the chaffinches and tomtits kept up a merry, musical chattering. The squire, with his son and daughter, was waiting at the great open door of the main entrance for his visitors, and as the carriage stopped he cried out, cheerily, "Welcome to Hallam!" Then there was a few minutes of pleasant confusion, and in them Phyllis had made a distinct picture on every mind.

"She's a dainty little woman," said the squire to himself, as he sat calmly smoking his pipe after the bustle of the arrival was over; "not much like a Hallam, but t' eye as isn't charmed wi' her 'ell hev no white in it, that's a' about it."

Antony was much interested, and soon sought his sister.

"If that is Cousin Phyllis, she is beautiful. Don't you think so, Elizabeth?"

"Yes; how perfectly she was dressed."

"That is a woman's criticism. Did you see her soft, dark eyes, her small bow-shaped mouth—a beauty one rarely finds in English women—her exquisite complexion, her little feet?"

"That is a man's criticism. How could you see all that in a moment or two of such confusion?"

"Easily; how was she dressed?"

"In a plain dress of gray cloth. The fit was perfect, the linen collar and cuffs spotless, the gray bonnet, with its drooping, gray feather bewitching. She wore gray gloves and a traveling cloak of the same color, which hung like a princess's mantle."

"How could you see all that in a moment or two of such confusion?"

"Do not be too clever, Antony. You forget I went with her to her rooms."

"Did you notice Richard?"

"A little; he resembles his sister. Their foreign look as they stood beside you and father was very remarkable. Neither of them are like Hallams."

"I am so glad of it; a new element coming into life is like a fresh wind 'blowing through breathless woods.'"

But Elizabeth sighed. This dissatisfaction with the old, and craving for the new, was one of the points upon which Antony and his father were unable to understand each other. Nothing permanent pleased Antony, and no one could ever predicate of him

what course he would pursue, or what side he would take. As a general rule, however, he preferred the opposition in all things. Now, the squire's principles and opinions were as clear to his own mind as his own existence was. He believed firmly in his Bible, in the English Constitution, and in himself. He admitted no faults in the first two; his own shortcomings toward Heaven he willingly acknowledged; but he regarded his attitude toward his fellow-man as without fault. All his motives and actions proceeded from well-understood truths, and they moved in consistent and admirable grooves.

Antony had fallen upon different times, and been brought under more uncertain influences. Oxford, "the most loyal," had been in a religious ferment during his stay there. The spirit of Pusey and Newman was shaking the Church of England like a great wind; and though Antony had been but little touched by the spiritual aspect of the movement, the temporal accusations of corruption and desertion of duty were good lances to tilt against the Church with. It gave him a curiously mixed pleasure to provoke the squire to do battle for her; partly from contradiction, partly that he might show off his array of second-hand learning and logic; and partly, also, for the delight of asserting his own opinions and his own individuality.

Any other dispute the squire would have settled by a positive assertion, or a positive denial; but

Elizabeth, too, had little cares and hospitable duties; she was often busy and often pre-occupied. It was necessary to have a great deal of company, and Richard perceived that among the usual visitors at Hallam he had more than one rival. But in this respect he had no fault to find with Elizabeth. She treated all with equal regard and to Richard alone unbent the proud sufficiency of her manner. And yet he was unhappy and dissatisfied. It was not the Elizabeth he had wooed and dreamed about. And he did not find that he reached any more satisfactory results than he had done by letter. Elizabeth could not "see her way clear to leave her father."

"If Antony married?" he asked.

"That would not alter affairs much. Antony could not live at Hallam. His business binds him to the vicinity of London."

There was but one new hope, and that was but a far probability. Antony had requested permission to repay, as soon as he was able, the £50,000, and resume his right as heir of Hallam. When he was able to do this Elizabeth would be freed from the duties which specially pertained to the property. As to her father's claim upon her, that could only end with his or her own life. Not even if Antony's wife was mistress of Hallam would she leave the squire, if he wished or needed her love.

And Elizabeth was rather hurt that Richard could not see the conditions as reasonable a service as she did.

"You may trust me," she said, "for ten, for twenty years; is not that enough?"

"No, it is not enough," he answered, warmly. "I want you now. If you loved me, you would leave all and come with me. That is how Phyllis loves John Millard."

"I think you are mistaken. If you were sick, and needed Phyllis for your comfort, or for your business, she would not leave you. Men may leave father and mother for their wives, that is their duty; but women have a higher commandment given them. It may be an unwritten Scripture, but it is in every good daughter's heart, Richard."

The squire did not again name to him the succession to Hallam. Antony's proposal had become the dearest hope of the old man's heart. He wished to live that he might see the estate honorably restored to his son. He had fully determined that it should go to Elizabeth, unless Antony paid the uttermost farthing of its redemption; but if he did this, then he believed that it might be safely entrusted to him. For a man may be reckless with money or land which he acquires by inheritance, but he usually prizes what he buys with money which he himself earns.

Therefore Richard's and Elizabeth's hopes hung upon Antony's success; and with such consolation as he could gather from this probability, and from Elizabeth's assurance of fidelity to him, he was obliged to content himself.

CHAPTER VII.

"For freedom's battle, once begun,
Bequeathed by bleeding sire to son,
Though baffled oft, is ever won."

"The unconquerable mind, and freedom's holy flame."

"With freedom's soil beneath our feet,
And freedom's banner streaming o'er us."

"And the King hath laid his hand
On the watcher's head;
Till the heart that was worn and sad,
Is quiet and comforted."

IT was a beautiful day at the close of May, 1836, and New Orleans was holding a jubilant holiday. The streets were full of flowers and gay with flying flags; bells were ringing and bands of music playing; and at the earliest dawn the levee was black with a dense crowd of excited men. In the shaded balconies beautiful women were watching; and on the streets there was the constant chatter of gaudily turbaned negresses, and the rollicking guffaws of the darkies, who had nothing to do but laugh and be merry.

New Orleans in those days took naturally to a holiday; and a very little excuse made her put on her festal garments, and this day she had the very best of reasons for her rejoicing. The hero of San Jacinto was coming to be her guest, and though he

was at death's door with his long-neglected wound, she was determined to meet him with songs of triumph. As he was carried in his cot through the crowded streets to the house of the physician who was to attend to his shattered bone, shouts of acclamation rent the air. Men and women and little children pressed to the cot-side, to touch his hand, or to look upon his noble, emaciated face. And though he had striven with things impossible, and was worn to a shadow with pain and fever, he must have felt that "welcome" an over-payment for all his toil and suffering.

Yet it was not alone General Houston that was honored that day by the men of New Orleans. He represented to them the heroes of the Texan Thermopylæ at the Alamo, the brave five hundred who had fallen in cold-blooded massacre at Goliad, and the seven hundred who had stood for liberty and the inalienable rights of manhood at San Jacinto. He was not only Sam Houston; he was the ideal in whom men honored all the noblest sentiments of humanity.

A few friends accompanied him, and among them John Millard. On reaching Texas John had gone at once to Houston's side; and in days and nights of such extremity as they shared together, friendship grows rapidly. Houston, like the best of great generals, had immense personal magnetism, and drew close to him the brave and the honest-hearted. John

gave him the love of a son for a father, and the homage of a soldier for a great leader. He rode by his side to victory, and he could not bear to leave him when he was in suffering and danger.

Phyllis expected John, and the Bishop went into the city to meet him. O, how happy she was! She went from room to room re-arranging the lace curtains, and placing every chair and couch in its prettiest position. The table on such holidays is a kind of altar, and she spread it with the snowiest damask, the clearest crystal, and the brightest silver. She made it beautiful with fresh cool ferns and budding roses. Outside Nature had done her part. The orange-trees filled the air with subtle fragrance, and the warm south wind wafted it in waves of perfume through the open doors and windows. Every vine was in its first beauty, every tree and shrub had as yet its spring grace, that luminous emerald transparency which seems to make the very atmosphere green. The garden was wearing all its lilies and pansies and sweet violets, and the birds were building, and shedding song upon every tree-top.

To meet her lover, when that lover comes back from the battle-field with the light of victory on his brow, what women will not put on all her beautiful garments? Phyllis's dark eyes held a wonderfully tender light, and the soft, rich pallor of her complexion took just the shadow of color from the dress of pale pink which fell in flowing lines to her small san-

daled feet. A few white narcissus were at her belt and in her black hair, and a fairer picture of pure and graceful womanhood never gladdened a lover's heart.

John had taken in and taken on, even in the few weeks of his absence, some of that peculiar air of independence which seems to be the spirit infusing every thing in Texan land. "I can't help it," he said, with a laugh; "it's in the air; the very winds are full of freedom; they know nothing will challenge them, and they go roving over the prairies with a sound like a song."

The Bishop had come back with John, but the Bishop was one of those old men who, while they gather the wisdom of age, can still keep their young heart. After supper was over he said: "Phyllis, my daughter, let them put me a chair and a table under the live oaks by the cabins. I am going to have a class-meeting there to-night. That will give me the pleasure of making many hearts glad, and it will give John a couple of hours to tell you all the wonderful things he is going to do."

And there, two hours afterward, John and Phyllis went to find him. He was sitting under a great tree, with the servants in little ebony squads around him at the doors of their white cabins; and singularly white they looked, under the swaying festoons of gray moss and in the soft light; for the moon was far up in the zenith, calm and bright and worshipful. John and Phyllis stood together, listening to

the close of his discourse, and sharing in the peace of his benediction. Then they walked silently back to the house, wonderfully touched by the pathos of a little "spiritual" that an old negress started, and whose whispering minor tones seemed to pervade all the garden—

"Steal away—steal away !
Steal away to Jesus !"

And in those moments, though not a word was uttered, the hearts of Phyllis and John were knitted together as no sensuous pleasure of dance or song could ever have bound them. Love touched the spiritual element in each soul, and received its earnest of immortality. And lovers, who have had such experiences together, need never fear that chance or change of life can separate them.

"John," said the Bishop, as they sat in the moonlight, "it is my turn now. I want to hear about Texas and about Houston. Where did you meet him?"

"I met him falling back from the Colorado. I crossed the Buffalo Bayou at Vance's Bridge, just above San Jacinto, and rode west. Twenty miles away I met the women and children of the western settlements, and they told me that Houston was a little farther on, interposing himself and his seven hundred men between the Mexican army and them. O, how my heart bled for them! They were foot-sore, hungry, and exhausted. Many of the women were carrying sick children. The whole country

behind them had been depopulated, and their only hope was to reach the eastern settlements on the Trinity before Santa Anna's army overtook them. I could do nothing to help them, and I hasted onward to join the defending party. I came up to it on the evening of the 20th of April—a desperate handful of men—chased from their homes by an overpowering foe, and quite aware that not only themselves, but their wives and children, were doomed by Santa Anna to an exterminating massacre.”

“What was your first impression of Houston, John?”

“That he was a born leader of men. He had the true imperial look. He was dressed in buckskin and an Indian blanket, and was leaning upon his rifle, talking to some of his men. ‘General,’ I said, ‘I am a volunteer. I bring you a true heart and a steady rifle’

“‘You are welcome, sir,’ he answered. ‘We are sworn to win our rights, or to die free men. Now, what do you say?’

“‘That I am with you with all my soul.’ Then I told him that there were two regiments on the way, and that the women of Nashville were raising a company of young men, and that another company would start from Natchez within a week. ‘Why, this is great news,’ he said; and he looked me steadily in the face till both our eyes shone and our hands met—I know not how—but I loved and trusted him.”

“I understand, John. When soldiers are few they

draw close together. Forlorn hopes have their glad hours, and when men press hands beneath the fire of batteries they touch souls also. It is war that gives us our brother-in-arms. The spiritual warfare knows this also, John.

“ ‘O, these are moments, rare fair moments!
Sing and shout, and use them well.’ ”

“The little band were without commissary and without transport; they were half-clad and half-armed, and in the neighborhood of a powerful enemy. They had been living three days upon ears of dried corn, but they had the will of men determined to be free and the hearts of heroes. I told them that the eyes of the whole country was on them, their sympathies with them, and that help was coming. And who do you think was with them, father? The very soul and spirit of their purpose?”

“Some Methodist missionary, doubtless.”

“Henry Stephenson. He had been preaching and distributing Bibles from San Antonia to the Sabine River, and neither soldier nor priest could make him afraid. He was reading the Bible, with his rifle in his hand, when I first saw him—a tall, powerful man, with a head like a dome and an eye like an eagle.”

“Well, well, John; what would you?”

“ ‘In iron times God sends with mighty power,
Iron apostles to make smooth his way.’ ”

What did he say to you?”

“Nothing specially to me ; but as we were lying around resting and watching he spoke to all. ‘Boys!’ he said, ‘I have been reading the word of the living God. We are his free-born sons, and the name of our elder brother, Christ, can’t be mixed up with any kind of tyranny, kingly or priestly ; we won’t have it. We are the children of the knife-bearing men who trampled kingly and priestly tyranny beneath their feet on the rocks of New England. We are fighting for our rights and our homes, and for the everlasting freedom of our children. Strike like men ! The cause commends the blow !’ ”

“And I wish I had been there to strike, John ; or, at least, to strengthen and succor those who did strike.”

“We had no drums, or fifes, or banners in our little army ; none of the pomp of war ; nothing that helps and stimulates ; but the preacher was worth them all.”

“I can believe that. When we remember how many preachers bore arms in Cromwell’s camps, there isn’t much miracle in Marston Moor and Worcester fight. You were very fortunate to be in time for San Jacinto.”

“I was that. Fortune may do her worst, she cannot rob me of that honor.”

“It was a grand battle.”

“It was more a slaughter than a battle. You must imagine Santa Anna with two thousand men behind

their breastworks, and seven hundred desperate Texans facing them. About noon three men took axes, and, mounting their horses, rode rapidly away. I heard, as they mounted, Houston say to them, 'Do your work, and come back like eagles, or you'll be behind time for the fight.' Then all was quiet for an hour or two. About the middle of the afternoon, when Mexicans are usually sleeping or gambling, we got the order to 'stand ready.' In a few moments the three men who had left us at noon returned. They were covered with foam and mire, and one of them was swinging an ax. As he came close to us he cried out, 'Vance's Bridge is cut down! Now fight for your wives and your lives, and remember the Alamo!'

Instantly Houston gave the order, 'Charge!' And the whole seven hundred launched themselves on Santa Anna's breastworks like an avalanche. Then there was three minutes of smoke and fire and blood. Then a desperate hand-to-hand struggle. Our men had charged the breastwork, with their rifles in their hands and their bowie-knives between their teeth. When rifles and pistols had been discharged they flung them away, rushed on the foe, and cut their path through a wall of living Mexicans with their knives. 'Remember the Alamo!' 'Remember the Goliad!' were the cries passed from mouth to mouth whenever the slaughter slackened. The Mexicans were panic-stricken. Of one column of five hundred

Mexicans only thirty lived to surrender themselves as prisoners of war."

"Was such slaughter needful, John?"

"Yes, it was needful, Phyllis. What do you say, father?"

"I say that we who shall reap where others sowed in blood and toil, must not judge the stern, strong hands that labored for us. God knows the kind of men that are needed for the work that is to be done. Peace is pledged in war, and often has the Gospel path been laid o'er fields of battle. San Jacinto will be no barren deed; 'one death for freedom makes millions free!'"

"Did you lose many men, John?"

"The number of our slain is the miracle. We had seven killed and thirty wounded. It is incredible, I know; and when the report was made to Houston he asked, 'Is it a dream?'"

"But Houston himself was among the wounded, was he not?"

"At the very beginning of the fight a ball crashed through his ankle, and his horse also received two balls in its chest; but neither man nor horse faltered. I saw the noble animal at the close of the engagement staggering with his master over the heaps of slain. Houston, indeed, had great difficulty in arresting the carnage; far over the prairie the flying foe were followed, and at Vance's Bridge—to which the Mexicans fled, unaware of its destruction—there was

an awful scene. The bayou was choked with men and horses, and the water red as blood."

"Ah, John; could you not spare the flying? Poor souls!"

"Daughter, keep your pity for the women and children who would have been butchered had these very men been able to do it! Give your sympathy to the men who fell in their defense. Did you see Stephenson in the fight, John?"

John smiled. "I saw him after it. He had torn up every shirt he had into bandages, and was busy all night long among the wounded men. In the early dawn of the next day we buried our dead. As we piled the last green sod above them the sun rose and flooded the graves with light, and Stephenson turned his face to the east, and cried out, like some old Hebrew prophet warrior:

"'Praise ye the Lord for the avenging of Israel, when the people willingly offered themselves.' . . .

"'My heart is toward the governors of Israel, that offered themselves willingly among the people. Bless ye the Lord.' . . .

"'So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord: but let them that love him be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might.'"

"Verses from a famous old battle hymn, John. How that Hebrew book fits itself to all generations! It is to humanity what the sunshine is to the material world, new every day; as cheering to one genera-

tion as to another, suitable for all ages and circumstances."

"I asked him where the verses were, and learned them. I want to forget nothing pertaining to that day. Look here!" and John took a little box out of his pocket and, opening it, displayed one grain of Indian corn. "Father, Phyllis, I would not part with that grain of corn for any money."

"It has a story, I see, John."

"I reckon it has. When Santa Anna, disguised as a peasant, and covered with the mud of the swamp in which he had been hiding, was brought before Houston, I was there. Houston, suffering very keenly from his wound, was stretched upon the ground among his officers. The Mexican is no coward. He bowed with all his Spanish graces and complimented Houston on the bravery of his small army, declaring 'that he had never before understood the American character.' 'I see now,' he said, laying both his hands upon his breast, 'that it is impossible to enslave them.' Houston put his hand in his pocket and pulled out part of an ear of corn. 'Sir,' he asked, 'do you ever expect to conquer men fighting for freedom who can march four days with an ear of corn for a ration?' Young Zavala looked at the corn, and his eyes filled. 'Senor,' he said, 'give me, I pray you, one grain of that corn; I will plant and replant it until my fields wave with it.' We answered the request with a shout, and Houston gave it away.

grain by grain. Phyllis shall plant and watch mine. In two years one grain will give us enough to sow a decent lot, and, if we live, we shall see many a broad acre tasseled with San Jacinto corn."

"You must take me to see your general, John."

"Father, we will go to-morrow. You are sure to like him—though, it is wonderful, but even now he has enemies."

"Not at all wonderful, John. No man can be liked by every one. God himself does not please all; nay, as men are, I think it may stand with divinity to say, He cannot."

"He will like to see you, sir. He told me himself that nearly all the Texan colonies brought not only their religion, but their preachers with them. He said it was these Protestant preachers who had fanned and kept alive the spirit of resistance to Spanish tyranny and to Roman priest-craft."

"I have not a doubt of it, John. You cannot have a free faith in an enslaved country. They knew that the way of the Lord must be prepared.

" ' Their free-bred souls
Went not with priests to school,
To trim the tippet and the stole,
And pray by printed rule.

" ' And they would cast the eager word
From their hearts fiery core,
Smoking and red, as God had stirred
The Hebrew men of yore.' "

During the next two weeks many similar conversations made the hours to all three hearts something far more than time chopped up into minutes. There was scarcely a barren moment, and faith and hope and love grew in them rapidly toward higher skies and wider horizons. Then General Houston was so much relieved that he insisted on going back to his post, and John returned to Texas with him.

But with the pleasant memories of this short, stirring visit, and frequent letters from John and Richard, the summer passed rapidly to Phyllis. Her strength was nearly restored, and she went singing about the house full of joy and of loving-kindness to all living things. The youngest servant on the place caught her spirit, and the flowers and sunshine and warmth all seemed a part of that ampler life and happiness which had come to her.

Richard returned in the fall. He had remained a little later than he intended in order to be present at Antony's marriage. "A very splendid affair, indeed," he said; "but I doubt if Lady Evelyn's heart was in it." It was rather provoking to Phyllis that Richard had taken entirely a masculine view of the ceremony, and had quite neglected to notice all the small details which are so important in a woman's estimate. He could not describe a single dress. "It seemed as if every one wore white, and made a vast display of jewelry. Pshaw! Phyllis, one wedding is just like another."

"Not at all, Richard. Who married them?"

"There was a Bishop, a dean, and a couple of clergymen present. I imagine the knot was very securely tied."

"Was the squire present?"

"No. They were married from the earl's town house. The squire was unable to take the journey. He was very quiet and somber about the affair."

"George Eltham, I suppose, was Antony's chief friend?"

"He was not there at all. The Elthams went to the Continent shortly before the wedding. It troubled the squire."

"Why? What particular difference could it make?"

"He said to me that it was the beginning of a change which he feared. 'George will leave t' firm next. Antony ought to have married Cicely Eltham. I know Eltham—he'll be angry at Cicely having been passed by—and he'll show it, soon or later, I'm sure.'"

"But Antony had a right to please himself."

"I fancy that he had been very attentive to Miss Eltham. I remember noticing something like it myself the summer you and I were first at Hallam."

"Elizabeth says, in her last letter, that they are in Paris."

"Probably they are back in England by this time.

Antony has taken a very fine mansion at Richmond."

"Is the bride pretty?"

"Very—only cold and indifferent, also. I am almost inclined to say that she was sad."

Then they talked of John's visit, and the subject had a great fascination for Richard. Perhaps Phyllis unconsciously described Texas, and Texan affairs, in the light of her own heart; it is certain that Richard never wearied of hearing her talk upon the subject; and the following spring he determined to see the country of which he had heard so much. John met him with a fine horse at the Buffalo Bayou, and they took their course direct west to the Colorado.

To one coming from the old world it was like a new world that had been lying asleep for centuries. It had such a fresh odor of earth and clover and wild flowers. The clear pure air caused a peculiar buoyancy of spirits. The sky was perfectly blue, and the earth freshly green. The sunrises had the pomp of Persian mornings, the nights the soft bright glory of the Texan moon. They rode for days over a prairie studded with islands of fine trees, the grass smooth as a park, and beautiful with blue salvias and columbines, with yellow coronella and small starry pinks, and near the numerous creeks the white feathery tufts of the fragrant meadow-sweet. It looked like miles and miles of green rumped velvet, full of

dainty crinklings, mottled with pale maroon, and cuir, purple, and cream-color.

"How beautiful is this place!" cried Richard, reverently; "surely this is one of the many mansions of our Father! One would be ashamed to be caught sinning or worrying in it!"

As they reached the pine sands the breeze was keener, and their spirits were still more joyous and elastic. The golden dust of the pine flower floated round in soft clouds, and sunk gently down to the ground. Was it not from the flower of the pine the old gods of Olympus extracted the odorous resin with which they perfumed their nectar? And then, shortly afterward, they came to the magnificent rolling prairies of the Colorado, with their bottomless black soil, and their timbered creeks, and their air full of the clean dainty scent of miles of wild honeysuckle.

"Now, Richard, drink—drink of the Colorado. It has a charm to lure you back to Texas, no matter how far away you stray. Soon or later 'the mustang feeling' will seize you, and you'll leave every thing and come back. Do you see yonder hilly roll, with the belt of timber at its foot?"

"Yes, I see it."

"On its summit I am going to build a home—a long, low log-house, spreading out under the live oaks, and draped with honeysuckles. Phyllis helped me to draw the plan of it when I saw her last. The

house will be built, and the vines planted by the end of this year. Then she has promised to come. I hope you will be glad, Richard."

"I shall be glad to see her and you happy."

But although the pretty nest was built, and the vines growing luxuriantly, it was not until the close of 1838, nearly two years and a half after San Jacinto, that the lovers could venture to begin their housekeeping. The Indians hung persistently about the timber of the Colorado, and it was necessary to keep armed men constantly on the 'range' to protect the lives of the advance corps of Anglo-American civilization. During this time John was almost constantly in the saddle, and Phyllis knew that it would be folly to add to his responsibility until his service was performed.

As it frequently happens, one change brings another. While the preparations were making for Phyllis's marriage, a letter arrived from Hallam which Richard could not refuse to answer in person. "My father is dying," wrote Elizabeth, "and he wishes much to see you." So the marriage was hurried forward, and took place in the last days of September. Some marriages do not much affect the old home, but that of Phyllis was likely to induce many changes. She would take with her to Texas Harriet and several of the old servants; and there was no one to fill her place as mistress of the house, or as her brother's companion. So that when she thought of the cheery

rooms, closed and silent, she was glad that Richard had to leave them, until the first shock of their separation was over.

She went away with a pretty and cheerful eclat. A steamer had been chartered to take the party and all their household belongings from New Orleans to Texas, for Phyllis was carrying much of her old life into her new one. The deck was crowded with boxes of every description; the cabin full of a cheerful party who had gone down to send away the bride with blessings and good wishes. It seemed all sad enough to Richard. After our first youth we have lost that recklessness of change which throws off the old and welcomes the new without regret. The past had been so happy, what the future might be none could tell.

He turned his face eastward without much hope. Elizabeth's letter had been short and inexplicit. "She would see him soon; letters never fully explained any thing." He arrived at Hallam toward the end of October, and having come by an earlier packet than had been named, he was not expected, and there was no one at the coach to meet him. It was one of those dying days of summer when there is a pale haze over the brown bare fields of the gathered harvests. Elizabeth was walking on the terrace; he saw her turn and come unconsciously toward him. She was pale and worn, and an inexpressible sadness was in her face. But the surprise revealed the full

beauty and tenderness of her soul. "O, Richard! Richard! my love! my love!" and so saying, she came forward with hands outstretched and level palms; and the rose came blushing into her cheeks, and the love-light into her eyes; and when Richard kissed her, she whispered, "Thank God you are come! I am so glad!"

People are apt to suppose that in old countries and among the wealthy classes years come and go and leave few traces. The fact is that no family is precisely in the same circumstances after an interval of a year or two. Gold cannot bar the door against sorrow, and tapestry and eider-down have no covenant with change. Richard had not been many hours in Hallam when he felt the influence of unusual currents and the want of customary ones. The squire's face no longer made a kind of sunshine in the big, low rooms and on the pleasant terraces. He was confined to his own apartments, and there Richard went to talk to him.

But he was facing death with a calm and grand simplicity. "I'd hev liked to hev lived a bit longer, Richard, if it hed been *His will*; but he knows what's best. I s'all answer willingly when he calls me. He knows t' right hour to make t' change; I'd happen order it too soon or too late. Now sit thee down, and tell me about this last fight for liberty. Phyllis hes fair made my old heart burn and beat to t' vary name o' Texas. I'm none bound by York-

shire, though I do think it's best bit o' land on t' face o' t' world. And I like to stand up for t' weakest side—that's Yorkshire! If I hed known nowt o' t' quarrel, I'd hev gone wi' t' seven hundred instead of t' two thousand; ay, would I!" Decay had not touched his mind or his heart; his eyes flashed, and he spoke out with all the fervor of his youth: "If I'd nobbut been a young man when a' this happened, I'm varry sure I'd hev pitch'd in and helped 'em. It's natural for Englishmen to hate t' Spaniards and Papists. Why, thou knows, we've hed some tussles wi' them ourselves; and Americans are our children, I reckon."

"Then Texans are your grandchildren; Texas is an American colony."

"They hed t' sense to choose a varry fine country, it seems. If I was young again, I'd travel and see more o' t' world. But when I was thy age folks thought t' sun rose and set i' England; that they did."

He was still able, leaning upon Richard's arm, to walk slowly up and down his room, and sometimes into the long, central gallery, where the likenesses of the older Hallams hung. He often visited them, pausing before individuals: "I seem ta be getting nearer to them, Richard," he said, one day; "I wonder if they know that I'm coming."

"I remember reading of a good man who, when he was dying, said to some presence invisible to mortal eyes, 'Go! and tell my dead, I come!'"

"I would like to send a message to my father and mother, and to my dear wife, and my dead son, Edward. It would be a varry pleasant thing to see a face you know and loved after that dark journey."

"I have read that

"Eyes watch us that we cannot see,
Lips warn us that we may not kiss,
They wait for us, and starrily
Lean toward us, from heaven's lattices.'"

"That's a varry comforting thought, Richard. Thou sees, as I draw near to t' other life, I think more about it; and t' things o' this life that used to worry me above a bit, hev kind of slipped away from me."

It seemed to be very true that the things of this life had slipped away from him. Richard expected him every day to speak about Hallam and Elizabeth; but week after week passed, and he did not name the estate. As Christmas drew near he was, however, much excited. Lady Evelyn was expected, and she was to bring with her Antony's son, who had been called after the squire. He longed to see the child, and at once took him to his heart. And he was a very beautiful boy, bright and bold, and never weary of lisping, "Gran'pa."

One night, after the nurse had taken him away, the squire, who was alone with Richard, said, "I commit that little lad to thy care, Richard; see he hes his rights, and do thy duty by him."

"If his father dies I will do all I am permitted to do."

"For sure; I forgot. What am I saying? There's Antony yet. He wants Hallam back. What does ta say?"

"I should be glad to see him in his place."

"I believe thee. Thou wilt stand by Elizabeth?"

"Until death."

"I believe thee. There's a deal o' Hallam in thee, Richard. Do thy duty by t' old place."

"I will. You may trust me, uncle."

"I do. That's a' that is to be said between thee and me. It's a bit o' comfort to hev heard thee speak out so straightfor'ard. God bless thee, nephew Richard!"

He brightened up considerably the week before Christmas, and watched Elizabeth and Lady Evelyn deck his room with box and fir and holly. The young mother was quiet and very undemonstrative, but she attached herself to the dying man, and he regarded her with a pitying tenderness, for which there appeared to be no cause whatever. As she carried away her boy in her arms on Christmas-eve, he looked sadly after her, and, touching Elizabeth's hand, said, "Be varry good to her, wilt ta?"

They had all spent an hour with him in honor of the festival, and about seven o'clock he went to bed. Richard knew that the ladies would be occupied for

a short time with some Christmas arrangements for the poor of the village, and he remained with the squire. The sick man fell into a deep sleep, and Richard sat quiet, with his eyes fixed upon the glowing embers. Suddenly the squire spoke out clear and strong—"Yes, father, I am coming!"

In the dim chamber there was not a movement. Richard glanced at the bed. His uncle's eyes were fixed upon him. He went to his side and grasped his hand.

"Did you hear him call me?"

"I heard no one speak but you."

"My father called me, Richard."

Richard fully believed the dying man. He stooped to his face and said, cheerfully, "You will not go alone then, dear uncle; I am glad for your sake!"

"Ay; it's nearly time to go. It's a bit sudden at last; but I'm ready. I wish Antony hed got here; tell them to come, and to bring t' little lad."

There was no disputing the change in the face, the authority of the voice. Gently they gathered around him, and Elizabeth laid the sleeping child on a pillow by his side. Richard saw him glance at the chubby little hand stretched out, and he lifted it to the squire's face. The dying man kissed it, and smilingly looked at Elizabeth. Then he let his eyes wander to Richard and his daughter-in-law.

"Good-bye, all!" he whispered, faintly, and al-

most with the pleasant words upon his lips he went away.

In a few hours the Christmas waits came singing through the park, and the Christmas bells filled the air with jubilant music; but Squire Henry Hallam had passed far beyond the happy clamor. He had gone home to spend the Christmas feast with the beloved who were waiting for him; with the just made perfect; with the great multitude which no man can number.

CHAPTER VIII.

"We are here to fight the battle of life, not to shirk it."

"The last days of my life until to-day,
What were they, could I see them on the street
Lie as they fell. Would they be ears of wheat
Sown once for food, but trodden into clay?
Or golden coins squandered and still to pay?"

"The only way to look bravely and prosperously forward is never to look back."

ANTHONY arrived at Hallam about an hour after the squire's death. He was not a man of quick affections, but he loved his father. He was grieved at his loss, and he was very anxious as to the disposition of the estate. It is true that he had sold his birthright, but yet he half expected that both his father and sister would at the last be opposed to his dispossession. The most practical of men on every other subject, he yet associated with his claim upon Hallam all kinds of romantic generousities. He felt almost sure that, when the will came to be read, he would find Hallam left to him, under conditions which he could either fulfill or set aside. It seemed, after all, a preposterous thing to leave a woman in control of such a property when there were already two male heirs. And Hallam had lately grown steadily upon his desires. He had not found money-

making either the pleasant or easy process he had imagined it would be; in fact, he had had more than one great disappointment to contend against.

As the squire had foreseen, his marriage with Lady Evelyn had not turned out well for him in a financial way. Lord Eltham, within a year after it, found a lucrative position in the colonies for his son George, and advised his withdrawal from the firm of "Hallam & Eltham." The loss of so much capital was a great blow to the young house, and he did not find in the Darragh connection any equivalent. No one could deny that Antony's plans were prudent, and dictated by a far-seeing policy; but perhaps he looked too far ahead to rightly estimate the contingencies in the interval. At any rate, after the withdrawal of George Eltham, it had been, in the main with him, a desperate struggle, and undoubtedly, Lord Eltham, by the very negation of his manner, by the raising of an eye-lash, or the movement of a shoulder, had made the struggle frequently harder than it ought to have been.

Yet Antony was making a brave fight for his position; if he could hold on, he might compel success. People in this age have not the time to be persistently hostile. Lord Eltham might get into power; a score of favorable contingencies might arise; the chances for him were at least equal to those against him. Just at this time his succession to the Hallam estate might save him. He was fully determined if it did come into his power never to put an acre of it

in danger; but it would represent so much capital in the eyes of the men with whom he had to count sovereigns.

And in his suspense he was half angry with Elizabeth. He thought she must divine his feelings, and might say a word which would relieve them, if she chose. He watched Richard jealously. He was sure that Richard would be averse to his future wife relinquishing any of her rights, and he could scarcely restrain the bitterness of his thoughts when he imagined Richard master of Hallam. And Richard, quite innocent of any such dream, preserved a calmness of manner, which Antony took to be positive proof of his satisfaction with affairs.

At length the funeral was over, and the will of the late squire made known. It was an absolute and bitter disappointment to Antony. "A good-will remembrance" of £1,000 was all that was left him; excepting the clause which enjoined Elizabeth to resell Hallam to him for £50,000, "if it seem reasonable and right so to do." Elizabeth was in full possession, and her father had taken every precaution to secure her rights, leaving her also practically unfettered as to the final disposition of the property.

But her situation was extremely painful, and many openly sympathized with Antony. "To leave such a bit o' property as Hallam to a lass!" was against every popular tradition and feeling. Antony was regarded as a wronged man; and Richard as a plot-

ting interloper, who added to all his other faults the unpardonable one of being a foreigner, "with a name that no Yorkshireman iver did hev?" This public sympathy, which he could see in every face and feel in every hand-shake, somewhat consoled Antony for the indifference his wife manifested on the subject.

"If you sold your right, you sold it," she said, coldly; "it was a strange thing to do, but then you turn every thing into money."

But to Elizabeth and Richard he manifested no ill-will. "Both of them might yet be of service to him;" for Antony was inclined to regard every one as a tool, which, for some purpose or other, he might want in the future.

He went back to London an anxious and disappointed man. There was also in the disappointment an element of humiliation. A large proportion of his London friends were unaware of his true position; and when, naturally enough, he was congratulated on his supposed accession to the Hallam property, he was obliged to decline the honor. There was for a few days a deal of talk in the clubs and exchanges on the subject, and many suppositions which were not all kindly ones. Such gossip in a city lasts but a week; but, unfortunately, the influence is far more abiding. People ceased to talk of the Hallam succession, but they remembered it, if brought into business contact with Antony, and it doubtless affected many a transaction.

In country places a social scandal is more permanent and more personally bitter. Richard could not remain many days ignorant of the dislike with which he was regarded. Even Lord Eltham, in this matter, had taken Antony's part. "Squire Hallam were always varry queer in his ways," he said; "but it beats a', to leave a property like Hallam to a lass. Whativer's to come o' England if t' land is put under women? I'd like to know that!"

"Ay; and a lass that's going to wed hersel' wi' a foreign man. I reckon nowt o' her. Such like goings on don't suit my notions, Eltham."

Just at this point in the conversation Richard passed the gossiping squires. He raised his hat, but none returned the courtesy. A Yorkshireman has, at least, the merit of perfect honesty in his likes and dislikes; and if Richard had cared to ask what offense he had given, he would have been told his fault with the frankest distinctness.

But Richard understood the feeling, and could afford to regard it tolerantly. "With their education and their inherited prejudices I should act the same," he thought, "and how are they to know that I have positively refused the very position they suspect me of plotting to gain?"

But he told Elizabeth of the circumstance, and upon it based the conversation as to their future, which he had been anxiously desirous to have. "You must not send me away again, love, upon a general

promise. I think it is my right to understand clearly what you intend about Hallam, and how soon you will become my wife."

She answered with a frank affection that delighted him: "We must give one year to my father's memory; then, Richard, come for me as soon as you desire."

"Say twelve months hence."

"I will be waiting for you."

"You will go with me to New Orleans?"

"I will go with you wherever you go. Your God shall be my God; your home, my home, Richard."

"My dear Elizabeth! I am the proudest and happiest man in the world!"

"And I, Richard; am I not happy, also? I have chosen you freely, I love you with all my heart."

"Have you considered well what you give up?"

"I have put you against it. My gain is incalculably greater than my loss."

"What will you do about Hallam?"

"I shall hold Hallam for Antony; and if he redeem it honorably, no one will rejoice more truly than I shall. If he fail to do this, I will hold it for Antony's son. I most solemnly promised my father to save Hallam for Hallam, if it was possible to do so wisely. He told me always to consult with Whaley and with you; and he has left all to our honor and our love."

"I will work with you, Elizabeth. I promised your father I would."

"I told Antony that I only held the estate for him, or his; but he did not believe me."

"When I come for you, what is to be done with it?"

"Whaley will take charge of it. The income will be in the meantime lawfully ours. Father foresaw so many 'ifs' and contingencies, that he preferred to trust the future welfare of Hallam to us. As events change or arise, we must meet them with all the wisdom that love can call forth."

Perhaps, considering all things, Richard had, after this explanation, as sure a hope for his future as he could expect. He left Hallam full of happy dreams and plans, and as soon as he reached his home began the improvements which were to make it beautiful for his wife. It had its own charm and fitness; its lofty rooms, furnished in cane and Indian matting; its scented dusk, its sweet breezes, its wealth of flowers and foliage. Whatever love could do to make it fair Richard did; and it pleased him to think that his wife would come to it in the spring of the year, that the orange-trees would be in bloom to meet her, and the mocking-birds be pouring out their fiery little hearts in melodious welcomes.

Elizabeth was just as happy in her preparations; there was a kind of mystery and sacredness about them, for a thoughtful woman is still in her joy, and not inclined to laughter or frivolity. But happy is

the man whose bride thus dreams of him, for she will bring into his home and life the repose of a sure affection, the cheerfulness of a well-considered purpose. Their correspondence was also peculiarly pleasant. Elizabeth threw aside a little of her reserve. She spoke freely to Richard of all her plans and fears and hopes. She no longer was shy in admitting her affection for him, her happiness in his presence, her loneliness without him. It was easy for Richard to see that she was gladly casting away every feeling that stood between them.

One morning, at the end of October, Elizabeth put on her mantle and bonnet and went to see Martha Craven. She walked slowly, as a person walks who has an uncertain purpose. Her face had a shadow on it; she sighed frequently, and was altogether a different Elizabeth from the one who had gone, two days before, the same road with quick, firm tread and bright, uplifted face. Martha saw her coming, and hastened to open the gate; but when Elizabeth perceived that Ben's wife was within, she said, "Nay, Martha, I don't want to stay. Will you walk back part of the way with me?"

"Ay, for sure! I'll nobbut get my shawl, Miss Hallam. I was turning thee over i' my mind when I saw thee coming. Is there aught wrong?"

"Why do you ask, Martha?"

"Nay, I'm sure I can't tell; only I can see fine that thou ar'n't same as thou was yesterday."

They were just entering the park, and Elizabeth stood musing while Martha closed the gates. Then, after walking a few yards, she said, "Martha, do you believe the dead can speak to the living?"

"Ay, I do. If t' living will hear, t' dead will speak. There's good men—and John Wesley among 'em—who lived w' one foot i' this world, and one in t' other. I would think man or woman hed varry little o' t' next world about 'em, who hed nivver seen or heard any thing from it. Them that hev sat weeping on their bedside at midnight—them that hev prayed death away from t' cradle side—them that hev wrestled a' night long, as Jacob did, they know whether t' next world visits this world or not. Hev you seen aught, Miss Hallam?"

"I have seen my father, Martha. Indeed I have."

"I don't doubt it, not a minute. He'd hev a reason for coming."

"He came to remind me of a duty and to strengthen me for it. Ah, Martha, Martha! If this cup could pass from me! if this cup could pass from me!"

"Honey, dear, what can Martha do for thee? I very Christian some time or other comes to Gethsemane. I hev found that out. Let this cup pass, Lord. Didn't I pray that prayer mysen, night and day?"

"Surely, Martha, about Ben—and God let it pass. But he does not always let it pass when we ask him."

"Then he does what is happen better—if we hev t' heart to trust him—he sends an angel to strengthen

us to drink it. I hev seen them as drank it wi' thanksgiving."

"O Martha! I am very, very sorrowful about it."

"And varry often, dearie, it is God's will for us to go forward—thou knows what I mean—to make a Calvary of our breaking hearts, and offer there t' sacrifice that is dearest and hardest. Can ta tell me what ta fears, dearie?"

"Just what you say, Martha, that I must pass from Gethsemane to Calvary, and sacrifice there what is my dearest, sweetest hope; and I shall have to bear it alone."

"Nay, thou wont. It isn't fair o' thee to say that; for thou knows better. My word, Miss Hallam, there's love above and below, and strength all round about. If thee and me didn't believe that, O what a thing it would be!"

"Martha, I may need help, the help of man and the help of woman. Can I trust to Ben and you?"

"I can speak for both of us. We'll wear our last breath i' your service. Neither Ben nor I are made o' stuff that 'll shrink in t' wetting. You can count on that, Miss Hallam."

The next evening, just after dusk, Elizabeth was standing at the dining-room window. The butler had just arranged the silver upon the sideboard, and was taking some last orders from his mistress. He was an old man with many infirmities, both of body and temper, but he had served Hallam for fifty years, and

was permitted many privileges. One of these was plain speech; and after a moment's consideration upon the directions given him, he said:

"There's summat troubling *them* as are dead and gone, Miss Hallam. If I was thee, I'd hev Mr. Antony come and do his duty by t' land. *They* don't like a woman i' their shoes."

"What are you talking about, Jasper?"

"I know right well what I'm talking about, Miss Hallam. What does t' Bible say? T' old men shall see visions—" He had advanced toward the window to draw the blinds, but Elizabeth, with a face pale as ashes, turned quickly to him and said:

"Leave the blinds alone, Jasper."

She stood between him and the window, and he was amazed at the change in her face. "She's like 'em a'," he muttered, angrily, as he went to his own sitting-room. "You may put a bridle in t' wind's mouth as easy as you'll guide a woman. If I hed been t' young squire, I'd hev brokken t' will a' to bits, that I would. 'Leave t' blinds alone, Jasper!' Highty-tighty, she is. But I've saved a bit o' brass, and I'll none stand it, not I!"

So little do we know of the motives of the soul at our side! Elizabeth was very far, indeed, from either pride or anger. But she had seen in the dim garden, peering out from the shrubbery, a white face that filled her with a sick fear. Then she had but one thought, to get Jasper out of the room, and was quite

unconscious of having spoken with unusual anger or authority.

When he had gone she softly turned the key in the door, put out the candles, and went to the window. In a few minutes Antony stood facing her, and by a motion, asked to be admitted.

"I don't want any one to know I have been here," he said, as he stood trembling before the fire. "It is raining, I am wet through, shivering, hungry. Elizabeth, why don't you speak?"

"Why are you here—in this way?"

She could hardly get the words out. Her tongue was heavy, her speech as difficult as if she had been in some terror-haunted dream.

"Because I am going away—far away—forever. I wanted to see you first."

"Antony! My brother! Antony, what have you done!"

"Hush, hush. Get me some food and dry clothes."

"Go to my room. You are safer there."

He slipped up the familiar stair, and Elizabeth soon followed him. "Here is wine and sweet-bread. I cannot get into the pantry or call for food without arousing remark. Antony, what is the matter?"

"I am ruined. Eltham and those Darraghs together have done it."

"Thank God! I feared something worse."

"There is worse. I have forged two notes. Together they make nearly £19,000. The first falls due

in three days. I have no hope of redeeming it. I am going to the other end of the world. I am glad to go, for I am sick of every thing here. I'll do well yet. You will help me, Elizabeth?"

She could not answer him.

"For our father's sake, for our mother's sake, you must help me away. It will be transportation for life. O, sister, give me another chance. I will put the wrong all right yet."

By this time she had gathered her faculties together.

"Yes, I'll help you, dear. Lie down and rest. I will go to Martha. I can trust the Cravens. Is it Liverpool you want to reach?"

"No, no; any port but Liverpool."

"Will Whitehaven do?"

"The best of all places."

"I will return as quickly as possible."

"But it is raining heavily, and the park is so gloomy. Let me go with you."

"I must go alone."

He looked at her with sorrow and tenderness and bitter shame. Her face showed white as marble against the dead black of her dress, but there was also in it a strength and purpose to which he fully trusted.

"I must ring for my maid and dismiss her, and you had better go to your own old room, Antony;" and as he softly trod the corridor, lined with the faces of his forefathers, Elizabeth followed him in thought, and shuddered at the mental picture she evoked.

Then she rang her bell, gave some trivial order, and excused her maid for the night. A quarter of an hour afterward she was hastening through the park, scarcely heeding the soaking rain, or the chill, or darkness, in the pre-occupation of her thoughts. She had flung a thick shawl over her head and shoulders, a fashion so universal as to greatly lessen her chance of being observed, and when she came to the park gates she looked up and down for some circumstance to guide her further steps. She found it in the lighted windows of the Methodist chapel. There was evidently a service there, and Martha would be present. If she waited patiently she would pass the gates, and she could call her.

But it was a wretched hour before Martha came, and Elizabeth was wet and shivering and sick with many a terror. Fortunately Martha was alone, and the moment Elizabeth spoke she understood, without surprise or explanations, that there was trouble in which she could help.

“Martha, where is Ben?”

“He stopp’d to t’ leaders’ meeting. He’ll be along in a little bit.”

“Can he bring a wool-comber’s suit and apron, and be at the gates, here, with his tax-cart in a couple of hours?”

“Yes; I know he can.”

“Martha, can you get me some bread and meat, without any one knowing?”

"Ay, I can. Mary 'll be up stairs wi' t' baby, I'se warrant. I'll be back wi' it, i' five minutes;" and she left Elizabeth walking restlessly just inside the gates. The five minutes looked an hour to her, but in reality Martha returned very speedily with a small basket of cold meat and bread.

"My brother, Martha, my brother, will be here in two hours. See that Ben is ready. He must be in Whitehaven as soon as possible to-morrow. Don't forget the clothes."

"I'll forget nothing that's needful. Ben'll be waiting. God help you, Miss Hallam!"

Elizabeth answered with a low cry, and Martha watched her a moment hastening through the rain and darkness, ere she turned back toward the chapel to wait for Ben.

A new terror seized Elizabeth as she returned. What if Jasper had locked the doors? How would it be possible for her to account for her strange absence from the house at that hour? But Antony had also thought of this, and after the main doors had been closed he had softly undone a side entrance, and watched near it for his sister's return. His punishment begun when he saw her wretched condition; but there was no time then for either apologies or reproaches.

"Eat," she said, putting the basket before him; "and Ben will be at the gates with his tax-cart. He will take you to Whitehaven."

"Can I trust Ben?"

She looked at him sadly. "You must have been much wronged, Antony, to doubt the Cravens."

"I have."

"God pity and pardon you."

He ate in silence, glancing furtively at his sister, who sat white and motionless opposite him. There was no light but the fire-light; and the atmosphere of the room had that singular sensitiveness that is apparent enough when the spiritual body is on the alert. It felt full of "presence;" was tremulous, as if stirred by wings; and seemed to press heavily, and to make sighing a relief.

After Antony had eaten he lay down upon a couch and fell into an uneasy sleep, and so continued, until Elizabeth touched him, and said, softly, "It is time, my dear. Ben will be waiting." Then he stood up and looked at her. She took his hands, she threw her arms around his neck, she sobbed great, heavy, quiet sobs against his breast. She felt that it was a last farewell—that she would never see his face again.

And Antony could not restrain himself. He kissed her with despairing grief. He made passionate promises of atonement. He came back three times to kiss once more the white cold face so dear to him, and each time he kissed a prayer for his safety and pardon off her lips. At the last moment he said, "Your love is great, Elizabeth. My little boy! I have wronged him shamefully."

"He shall be my child. He shall never know shame. I will take the most loving care of his future. You may trust him to me, Antony."

Then he went away. Elizabeth tried to see him from the window, but the night was dark, and he kept among the shrubbery. At such hours the soul apprehends and has presentiments and feelings which it obeys without analyzing them. She paced the long corridor, feeling no chill and no fear, and seeming to see clearly the pictured faces around her. She was praying; and among them she did not feel as if she was praying aloud. She remembered in that hour many things that her father had said to her about Antony. She knew then the meaning of that strange cry on her mother's dying lips—"A far country! Bring my son home!"

For an hour or two it was only Antony's danger and shame, only Antony's crime, she could think of. But when the reaction came she perceived that she must work as well as pray. Two questions first suggested themselves for her solution.

Should she go to Whaley for advice, or act entirely on her own responsibility?

Would she be able to influence Page and Thorley, the bankers who held her brother's forged notes, by a personal visit?

She dismissed all efforts at reasoning, she determined to let herself be guided by those impressions which we call "instinct." She could not reason, but

she tried to feel. And she felt most decidedly that she would have no counselor but her own heart. She would doubtless do what any lawyer would call "foolish things;" but that was a case where "foolishness" might be the highest wisdom. She said to herself, "My intellect is often at fault, but where Antony and Hallam are concerned I am sure that I can trust my heart."

As to Page and Thorley, she knew that they had had frequently business transactions with her father. Mr. Thorley had once been at the hall; he would know thoroughly the value of the proposal she intended making them; and, upon the whole, it appeared to be the wisest plan to see them personally. In fact, she did not feel as if she could endure the delay and the uncertainty of a correspondence on the subject.

On the morning of the second day after Antony's flight she was in London. In business an Englishman throws over politeness. He says, "How do you do?" very much as if he was saying, "Leave me alone;" and he is not inclined to answer questions, save, by "yes" or "no." Elizabeth perceived at once that tears or weakness would damage her cause, and that the only way to meet Antony's wrong was to repair it, and to do this in the plainest and simplest manner possible.

"I am Miss Hallam."

"Take a seat, Miss Hallam."

"You hold two notes of my brother's, one purporting to be drawn by Lord Eltham for £9,000; the other by Squire Francis Horton for £9,600."

"Yes; why 'purporting?'"

"They are forgeries."

"My—! Miss Hallam, do you know what you are saying?"

"I do. My brother has left England. He is ruined."

"I told you, Page!" said Thorley, with much irritation; "but you would believe the rascal."

Elizabeth colored painfully, and Mr. Thorley said, "You must excuse me, Miss Hallam—"

"This is not a question for politeness, but business. I will pay the bills. You know I am sole proprietor of Hallam."

"Yes."

"The case is this. If you suffer the notes to be protested, and the law to take its course, you will get nothing. You may punish Mr. Hallam, if you succeed in finding him; but will not the money be better for you?"

"We have duties as citizens, Miss Hallam."

"There has been no wrong done which I cannot put right. No one knows of this wrong but ourselves. I might plead mercy for so young a man, might tell you that even justice sometimes wisely passes by a fault, might remind you of my father and the unsullied honor of an old name; yes, I might say all

this, and more, but I only say, will you let me assume the debt, and pay it?"

"How do you propose to do this, Miss Hallam?"

"The income from the estate is about £5,000 a year. I will make it over to you."

"How will you live?"

"That is my affair."

"There may be very unpleasant constructions put upon your conduct—for it will not be understood."

"I am prepared for that."

"Will you call for our answer in three hours?"

"Will you promise me to take no steps against my brother in the interim?"

"Yes; we can do that. But if we refuse your offer, Miss Hallam?"

"I must then ask your forbearance until I see Lord Eltham and Squire Horton. The humiliation will be very great, but they will not refuse me."

She asked permission to wait in an outer office, and Mr. Page, passing through it an hour afterward, was so touched by the pathetic motionless figure in deep mourning, that he went back to his partner, and said, "Thorley, we are going to agree to Miss Hallam's proposal; why keep her in suspense?"

"There is no need. It is not her fault in any way."

But Elizabeth was obliged to remain two days in London before the necessary papers were drawn out and signed, and they were days of constant terror

and anguish. She went neither to Antony's house, nor to his place of business; but remained in her hotel, so anxious on this subject, that she could not force her mind to entertain any other. At length all was arranged, and it did comfort her slightly that both Page and Thorley were touched by her grief and unselfishness into a spontaneous expression of their sympathy with her :

“ You have done a good thing, Miss Hallam,” said Mr. Page, “ and Page and Thorley fully understand and appreciate your motives; ” and the kind faces and firm hand-clasps of the two men brought such a look into Elizabeth's sorrowful eyes, that they both turned hurriedly away from her. During her journey home she slept heavily most of the way; but when she awoke among the familiar hills and dales, it was as if she had been roused to consciousness by a surgeon's knife. A quick pang of shame and terror and a keen disappointment turned her heart sick; but with it came also a sense of renewed courage and strength, and a determination to face and conquer every trouble before her.

Jasper met her, and he looked suspiciously at her. For his part, he distrusted all women, and he could not understand why his mistress had found it necessary to go to London. But he was touched in his way by her white, weary face, and he busied himself in making the fire burn bright, and in setting out her dinner table with all the womanly delicacies he knew

she liked. If Elizabeth could only have fully trusted him, Jasper would have been true as steel to her, a very sure and certain friend; but he resented trouble from which he was shut out, and he was shrewd enough to feel that it was present, though hidden from him.

"Has any one been here while I was absent, Jasper?"

"Ay, Squire Fairleigh and Miss Fairleigh called; and Martha Craven was here this morning. I think Martha is talking wi' Nancy Bates now—she looked a bit i' trouble. It's like Ben's wife hes hed a fuss wi' her!"

"I think not, Jasper. Tell her I wish to see her."

The two women stood looking at each other a moment, Elizabeth trembling with anxiety, Martha listening to the retreating steps of Jasper.

"It is a' as you wished, Miss Hallam."

"Is Ben back?"

"Ay, early this morning."

"Did he meet any one he knew?"

"He met Tim Hardcastle just outside Hallam, *that night*. Tim said, 'Thou's late starting wheriver to, Ben;' and Ben said, 'Nay, I'm early. If a man wants a bit o' good wool he's got to be after it.' This morning he came back wi' tax-cart full o' wool."

"And my brother?"

"He sailed from Whitehaven yesterday."

"To what place?"

"Ben asked no questions. If he doesn't know where Mr. Hallam went to, he can't say as he does. It's best to know nowt, if you are asked."

"O Martha!"

"Hush, dearie! Thou must go and sleep now. Thou's fair worn out. To-morrow 'll do for crying."

But sleep comes not to those who call it. Elizabeth in the darkness saw clearly, in the silence felt, the stir and trouble of a stormy sea surging up to her feet. It was not sleep she needed, so much as that soul-repose which comes from a decided mind. Her attitude toward her own little world and toward Richard was still uncertain. She had not felt able to face either subject as yet.

Two days after her return the papers were full of her brother's failure and flight. Many hard things were said of Antony Hallam; and men forgave more easily the reckless speculation which had robbed them, than the want of manly courage which had made him fly from the consequences of his wrongdoing. It was a bitter ordeal for a woman as proud as Elizabeth to face alone. But she resented most of all that debt of shame which had prevented her devoting the income of Hallam to the satisfaction of her brother's creditors. For them she could do nothing, and some of them were wealthy farmers and traders living in the neighborhood of Hallam, and who had had a blind faith in the integrity and solvency of a house with a Hallam at the head of it.

These men soon began to grumble at their loss, and to be quite sure that "t' old squire would nivver hev let 'em lose a farthing;" and to look so pointedly at Miss Hallam, even on Sundays, that she felt the road to and from church a way of sorrow and humiliation.

Nor could she wholly blame them. She knew that her father's good name had induced these men to trust their money with Antony; and she knew, also, that her father would have been very likely to have done as they were constantly asserting he would—"mortgage his last acre to pay them." And she could not explain that terrible first claim to them, since she had decided to bear every personal disgrace and disappointment, rather than suffer the name of Hallam to be dragged through the criminal courts, and associated with a felon.

Not even to Whaley, not even to Richard, would she tell the shameful secret; therefore she must manage her own affairs, and this would necessarily compel her to postpone, perhaps relinquish altogether, her marriage. Her first sorrowful duty was to write to Richard. He got the letter one lovely morning in November. He was breakfasting on the piazza and looking over some estimates for an addition to the conservatory. He was angry and astonished. What could Elizabeth mean by another and an indefinite delay? He was far from regarding Antony's failure as a never-to-be-wiped-out stain, and he was not much astonished at his flight. He had never regarded

Antony as a man of moral courage, or even of inflexible moral principles, and he failed to see how Antony's affairs should have the power to overthrow his plans.

But Elizabeth positively forbid him to come; positively asserted that her marriage, at a time of such public shame and disapproval, would be a thing impossible to contemplate. She said that she herself had no desire for it, and that every instinct of her nature forbid her to run away from her painful position, and thus incur the charge of cowardice which had been so freely attached to Antony. It was true that the positive sternness of these truths were softened by a despairing tenderness, a depth of sorrow and disappointment, and an avowal of undying love and truth which it was impossible to doubt. But this was small comfort to the young man. His first impulse was one of extreme weariness of the whole affair. He had been put off from year to year, until he felt it a humiliation to accept any further excuses. And this time his humiliation would in a measure be a public one. His preparations for marriage were widely known, for he had spoken freely to his friends of the event. He had spent a large sum of money in adding to and in decorating his home. It was altogether a climax of the most painful nature to him.

Elizabeth had fully released him from every obligation, but at the same time she had declared that

her whole life would be consecrated to his memory. Richard felt that the release was just as nominal in his own case. He knew that he never could love any woman but Elizabeth Hallam, and that just as long as she loved him, she held him by ties no words could annul. But he accepted her dictum; and the very fullness of his heart, and the very extremity of his disappointment, deprived him of the power to express his true feelings. His letter to Elizabeth was colder and prouder than he meant it to be; and had that sorrowfully resentful air about it which a child wears who is unjustly punished and yet knows not how to defend himself.

It came to Elizabeth after a day of extreme humiliation—the day on which she called her household servants together and dismissed them. She had been able to give them no reason for her action, but a necessity for economy, and to soften the dismissal by no gift. Adversity flatters no one, and not a soul expressed any grief at the sundering of the tie. She was even conscious, as she had frequently been since Antony's failure, of an air that deeply offended her—a familiarity that was not a friendly one—the covert presumption of the mean-hearted toward their unfortunate superiors. She did not hear the subsequent conversation in the servants' hall, and it was well she did not, for, though the insolence that vaunts itself covertly is hard to bear, it is not so hard as that which visibly hurts the eye and offends the ear.

"Thank goodness!" said Jasper, "I've saved a bit o' brass, and miss may be as highty-tighty as she likes. This is what comes o' lettin' women out o' t' place God put 'em in."

"She's gettin' that near and close," said cook, "I wouldn't stop wi' her for nowt. It's been, 'Ann, be careful here,' and, 'Ann, don't waste there,' till I'se fair sick o' it. She'll not get me to mak' mysen as mean as that. Such like goings on, I nivver!"

"And she's worst to please as iver was!" said Sarah Lister, Miss Hallam's maid. "I'm sure I don't know what's come over her lately. She used to give me many a dress and bit o' lace or ribbon. She gives nowt now. It isn't fair, you know!"

"She's savin' for that foreign chap, that's what it is," said Jasper. "I'll nivver believe but what t' land goes back to t' male heirs some way or t' other. It stands to reason that it should; and she's gettin' a' she can, while she holds t' keys. She'll mak' a mess o' it, see if she doesn't!"

And with this feeling flavoring the household, Elizabeth found the last month of the year a dismal and resentful one. In pursuance of the plans she had laid down for herself, the strictest economy was imperative; for what little she could now save from the plenty of the old housekeeping, might have to see her through many days. At Christmas she bid "good-bye" to every one of her old servants, and even this simple duty had its trial. She stood a hard

ten minutes with the few sovereigns in her hand which would be requisite if she gave them their usual Christmas gratuity. Pride urged her to give it; prudence told her, "You will need it." She was not forgetful of the unkind things that would be said of her, but she replaced the money in her desk with this reflection, "I have paid them fully for their service; I must be just before I am generous."

They left early in the day, and for a few hours Elizabeth was the only soul in the old hall. But at night-fall Ben Craven's tax-cart brought his mother, and a few of her personal belongings, and then the village gossips understood "what Miss Hallam was going to do with hersen." Martha took entire charge of the hall, and of all its treasures; and the lonely mistress went to her room that night with the happy consciousness that all she had was in loving and prudent keeping.

It was also a great comfort to feel that she was not under the constant prying of unsympathetic eyes. Elizabeth had suffered keenly from that bitterest of all oppressions, heart-constraint. She often wished to weep, but did not dare. The first servant that entered the room was her master. She owed him a calm expression of face and pleasant words, and if she failed to give them he rent her secret from her. O be certain that every sorrowful soul sighs for the night, as the watchman of Judæa did for the morning. It longs for the shadows that conceal its tears;

it invokes the darkness which gave it back to itself!

With a sense of infinite relief Elizabeth sat in the still house. It was pleasant to hear only Martha's feet going to and fro; to feel that, at last, she was at liberty to speak or to be silent, to smile or to weep, to eat or to let food alone. When Martha brought in her bedroom candle, and said, "Good-night, Miss Hallam; you needn't hev a care about t' house, I'll see to ivery thing," Elizabeth knew all was right, and went with an easy mind to her own room.

Christmas-eve! She had looked forward all the year to it. Richard was to have been at Hallam for Christmas. She had thought of asking Antony and his wife and child, of filling the old rooms with young, bright faces, and of heralding in her new life in the midst of Christmas joys. She had pleased herself with the hope of telling Antony all her plans about "the succession." She had dreamed many a bright dream of her bridal in the old church, and of the lovely home to which she was going soon after the New Year. It was hard to give all up! Still harder to suffer, in addition, misconstruction and visible dislike and contempt.

"Why had it been permitted?" She fell asleep with the question in her heart, and was awakened by the singing of the waits. It was a chill, windy night, with a young moon plunging wildly in and out a sea of black driving clouds. She sat by the fire listening

to the dying melody, and thinking of the Christmas-eve when Phyllis stood by her side, and the world seemed so full of happiness and hope. She had had a letter from Phyllis a few days before, a very loving, comforting, trustful letter, and she thought she would read it again. It had been laid within a book which Phyllis had given her, and she brought it to the fireside. It was a volume of poetry, and Elizabeth was not poetical. She could not remember having read a page in this volume, but as she lifted the letter her eyes fell upon these words :

“The priests must serve
Each in his course, and we must stand in turn
Awake with sorrow, in the temple dim
To bless the Lord by night.”

The words affected her strangely ; she turned the page backward, and read,

“It is the night,
And in the temple of the Lord, not made
By mortal hands, the lights are burning low
Before the altar. Clouds of darkness fill
The vastness of the sacred aisles. . . .
. . . A few short years ago
And all the temple courts were thronged with those
Who worshiped and gave thanks before they went
To take their rest. Who shall bless
His name at midnight ?

“Lo ! a band of pale
Yet joyful priest do minister around
The altar, where the lights are burning low
In the breathless night. Each grave brow wears the crown

Of sorrow, and each heart is kept awake
By its own restless pain: for these are they
To whom the night-watch is appointed. See!
They lift their hands and bless God in the night
Whilst we are sleeping: Those to whom the King
Has measured out a cup of sorrow, sweet
With his dear love; yet very hard to drink,
Are waking in his temple; and the eyes
That cannot sleep for sorrow or for pain
Are lifted up to heaven, and sweet low songs
Broken by patient tears, arise to God.

“The priests must serve
Each in his course, and we must stand in turn
Awake with sorrow in the temple dim,
To bless the Lord by night. We will not fear
When we are called at midnight by some stroke
Of sudden pain, to rise and minister
Before the Lord. We too will bless his name
In the solemn night, and stretch out our hands to him.”

And she paused, and lifted a face full of joy and confidence. A new light came into her soul; and, standing up before the Lord, she answered the message in the words of Bunyan, “I am willing with all my heart, Lord!”

CHAPTER IX.

“Walk boldly and wisely in that light thou hast,
There is a hand above will help thee on.”

“I deemed thy garments, O my hope, were gray,
So far I viewed thee. Now the space between
Is passed at length; and garmented in green
Even as in days of yore thou stand’st to-day.”

“Bless love and hope. Full many a withered year
Whirled past us, eddying to its chill doomsday;
And clasped together where the brown leaves lay,
We long have knelt and wept full many a tear,
Yet lo! one hour at last, the spring’s compeer,
Flutes softly to us from some green by-way,
Those years, those tears are dead; but only they:
Bless love and hope, true souls, for we are here.”

THE strength that had come to Elizabeth with a complete resignation to the will of God was sorely needed and tested during the following week. It had been arranged between herself and Page and Thorley that they should have the whole income of the Hallam estate, deducting only from it the regular cost of collection. Whaley Brothers had hitherto had the collection, and had been accustomed to deposit all proceeds in the banking-house of their brother-in-law, Josiah Broadbent. Elizabeth had determined to be her own collector. The fees for the duty would be of the greatest service to her in her

impoverished condition; and she did not wish the Broadbents and Whaleys to know what disposition was made of the revenue of Hallam.

But the Whaleys were much offended at the change. They had so long managed the business of Hallam, that they said the supposition was unavoidable, that Elizabeth suspected them of wronging her, as soon as there was no man to overlook matters. They declared that they had done their duty as faithfully as if she had been able to check them at every turn, and even said they would prefer to do that duty gratis, rather than relinquish a charge with which the Whaleys had been identified for three generations.

But Elizabeth had reasons for her conduct which she could not explain; and the transfer was finally made in a spirit of anger at a supposed wrong. It grieved her very much, for she was unused to disputes, and she could not look at the affair in a merely business light. With some of the older tenants her interviews were scarcely more pleasant. They had been accustomed to meeting one of the Whaleys at "The Rose and Crown Inn," and having a good dinner and a few pints of strong ale over their own accounts. There was no prospect of "makkin' a day o' it" with Miss Hallam; and they had, besides, a dim idea that they rather lowered their dignity in doing business with a woman.

However, Elizabeth succeeded in thoroughly winning Peter Crag, the tenant of the home farm, and a

man of considerable influence with men of his own class. He would not listen to any complaints on the subject. "She's a varry sensible lass," he said, striking his fist heavily on the table; "she's done right, to get out o' t' Whaleys' hands. I've been under their thumbs mysen; and I know what it is. I'm bound to do right by Squire Henry's daughter, and I'd like to see them as is thinking o' doing wrong, or o' giving her any trouble—" and as his eyes traveled slowly round the company, every man gravely shook his head in emphatic denial of any such intention. Still, even with Peter Crag to stand behind her, Elizabeth did not find her self-elected office an easy one. She was quite sure that many a complaint was entered, and many a demand made, that would never have been thought of if Whaley had been the judge of their justice.

She had to look at her position in many lights, and chiefly in that of at least five years' poverty. At the New-Year she withdrew her balance from Josiah Broadbent's. It was but little over £600, and this sum was to be her capital upon which, in cases of extra expenditure, she must rely. For she had no idea of letting either the house or grounds fall into decay or disorder. She calculated on many days of extra hire to look after the condition of the timber in the park, the carriages and the saddlery, and the roofs and gutterings of the hall and the outhouses. She had carefully considered all necessary expenditures, and she

had tried in imagination to face every annoyance in connection with her peculiar position.

But facing annoyances in reality is a different thing, and Elizabeth's sprang up from causes quite unforeseen, and from people whom she had never remembered. She had a calm, proud, self-reliant nature, but such natures are specially wounded by small stings; and Elizabeth brought home with her from her necessary daily investigations many a sore heart, and many a throbbing, nervous headache. All the spirit of her fathers was in her. She met insult and wrong with all their keen sense of its intolerable nature, and the hand that grasped her riding whip could have used it to as good purpose as her father would have done, only, that it was restrained by considerations which would not have bound him.

In her home she had, however, a shelter of great peace. Her neighbors and acquaintances dropped her without ceremony. The Whaleys had thought it necessary in their own defense to say some unkind things, and to suppose others still more unkind; and it was more convenient for people to assume the Whaleys' position to be the right one, than to continue civilities to a woman who had violated the traditionary customs of her sex, and who was not in a position to return them. But in her home Martha's influence was in every room, and it always brought rest and calm. She knew instinctively when she was needed, and when solitude was needed; when Elizabeth would

choose to bear her troubles in silence, and when she wanted the comfort of a sympathizing listener.

Thus the first nine months of her ordeal passed. She heard during them several times from Phyllis, but never one line had come from Richard, or from Antony. Poor Antony! He had dropped as absolutely out of her ken as a stone dropped in mid-ocean. The silence of both Richard and her brother hurt her deeply. She thought she could have trusted Richard if their positions had been reversed. She was sure she would have helped and strengthened him by constant hopeful letters. For a month or two she watched anxiously for a word; then, with a keen pang, gave up the hope entirely. Through Phyllis she learned that he was still in New Orleans, and that he had gone into partnership with a firm who did a large Mexican trade. "He is making money fast," said Phyllis, "but he cares little for it."

It is one good thing in a regular life that habit reconciles us to what was at first very distasteful. As the months went on Elizabeth's business difficulties lessened. The tenants got accustomed to her, and realized that she was neither going to impose upon them, nor yet suffer herself to be imposed upon. The women found her sympathizing and helpful in their peculiar troubles, and there began to be days when she felt some of the pleasures of authority, and of the power to confer favors. So the summer and autumn passed, and she began to look toward the end of her

first year's management. So far its record had been favorable; Page and Thorley had had no reason to complain of the three installments sent them.

She was sitting making up her accounts one evening at the end of October. It was quite dark, and very cold, and Martha had just built up a fire, and was setting a little table on the hearth-rug for Miss Hallam's tea. Suddenly the bell of the great gates rang a peal which reverberated through the silent house. There was no time for comment. The peal had been an urgent one, and it was repeated as Martha, followed by Elizabeth, hastened to the gates. A carriage was standing there, and a man beside it, who was evidently in anxiety or fright.

"Come away wi' you! Don't let folks die waiting for you. Here's a lady be varry near it, I do be thinking."

The next moment Martha was helping him to carry into the house a slight, unconscious form. As they did so, Elizabeth heard a shrill cry, and saw a little face peering out of the open door of the carriage. She hastened to it, and a child put out his arms and said, "Is you my Aunt 'Izzy?"

"Then Elizabeth knew who it was. "O my darling!" she cried, and clasped the little fellow to her breast, and carried him into the house with his arms around her neck and his cheeks against hers.

Evelyn lay, a shadow of her former self, upon a sofa; but in a short time she recovered her conscious-

ness and, opening her large, sad eyes, let them rest upon Elizabeth, who still held the boy to her breast.

"I am come to you, Elizabeth. I am come here to die. Do not send me away. It will not be long."

"Long or short, Evelyn, this is your home. You are very, very welcome to it. I am glad to have you near me."

There was no more said at that time, but little by little the poor lady's sorrowful tale was told. After Antony's failure she had returned to her father's house. "But I soon found myself in every one's way," she said, mournfully. "I had not done well for the family—they were disappointed. I was interfering with my younger sisters—I had no money—I was an eye-sore, a disgrace. And little Harry was a trouble. The younger children mocked and teased him. The day before I left a servant struck him, and my mother defended the servant. Then I thought of you. I thought you loved the child, and would not like him to be ill-used when I can no longer love him."

"I do love him, Evelyn; and no one shall ill-use him while I live."

"Thank God! Now the bitterness of death is passed. There is nothing else to leave."

The boy was a lovely boy, inheriting his father's *physique* with much of his mother's sensitive refined nature. He was a great joy in the silent, old house. He came, too, just at the time when Elizabeth, hav-

ing conquered the first great pangs of her sorrow, was needing some fresh interest in life. She adopted him with all her heart. He was her lost brother's only child, he was the prospective heir of Hallam. In him were centered all the interests of the struggle she was making. She loved him fondly, with a wise and provident affection.

It scarcely seemed to pain Evelyn that he clung to Elizabeth more than to herself. "He cannot reason yet," she said, "and instinct leads him to you. He feels that you are strong to love and protect him. I am too weak to do any thing but die. She was, indeed, unable to bear his presence long at a time; and his short visits to the silent, darkened chamber were full of awe and mystery to the sensitive child. In a month it became evident that the end was very near. She suffered much, and Elizabeth left her as little as possible. She was quite dependent upon her love, for Elizabeth had notified the dying lady's family of her dangerous condition, and no action of any kind was taken upon the information.

One night Evelyn seemed a little easier, and Harry stayed longer with her. Martha came three times for the child ere she would consent to let him go. Then she took the pretty face in her hands, gave it one long gaze and kiss, and shut her eyes with a painful, pitiful gasp. Elizabeth hastened to her side; but she knew what was passing in the mother's heart, and presumed not to intermeddle in her sorrow. But

half an hour afterward, when she saw heavy tears steal slowly from under the closed eyelids, she said, as she wiped them gently away,

“Dear Evelyn, why do you weep?”

“For my poor little wasted life, love; what a mistake it has been. I do not remember a single happiness in it.”

“Your childhood, Evelyn?”

“I think it was saddest of all. Children miss happiness most. My childhood was all books and lessons and a gloomy nursery, and servants who scolded us when we were well, and neglected us when we were sick. I remember when I had scarlet fever, they used to put a little water and jelly on a chair beside me at night, but I was too weak to reach them. What long hours of suffering! What terrors I endured from many causes!”

“Forget that now, dear.”

“I cannot. It had its influence on all the rest. Then when I grew to childhood I heard but one thing: ‘You must marry well.’ I was ordered to make myself agreeable, to consider the good of the family, to remember my little sisters, my brothers who had no money and very few brains. It was to be my duty to sacrifice myself for them. Antony saw me; he thought I should be of service to him. My father thought Antony’s business would provide for the younger boys. I was told to accept him, and I did. That is all about my life, Elizabeth. I had

my dream of love, and of being loved like all other girls, but—”

“But Antony was kind to you?”

“Yes; he was never unkind. He troubled me very little. But I was very lonely. Poor Antony! I can remember and understand now; he also had many sorrows. It was in those days I first began to pray, Elizabeth. I found that God never got tired of hearing me complain; mother scarcely listened—she had so much to interest her—but God always listened.”

“Poor Evelyn!”

“‘So I am watching quietly
Every day;
Whenever the sun shines brightly,
I rise, and say,
‘Surely it is the shining of His face!’”

I think he will come to-night, Elizabeth.”

“You have no fear now?”

“It has gone. Last night I dreamed of passing through a dreary river, and as I stumbled, blind and weak in the water, Christ Jesus stretched out his hand—a gentle, pierced hand, and immediately I was on the shore, and there was a great light whose glory awoke me. When the river is to cross, ‘the hand’ will be there.”

She spoke little afterward. About midnight there was a short struggle, and then a sudden solemn peace. She had touched the hand pierced for her salvation,

and the weary was at rest. Elizabeth had promised her that she should be laid in the church-yard at Hallam. There was no opposition made to this disposition of the remains, and the funeral was very quietly performed.

Unfortunately, during all these changes the rector had been away. About a week before Antony's flight he was compelled to go to the south of France. His health had failed in an alarming manner, and his recovery had been slow and uncertain. Many a time, in her various trials, Elizabeth had longed for his support. She had even thought that it might be possible to tell him the full measure of her sorrow. At Evelyn's funeral she missed him very much. She remembered how tender and full of grace all his ministrations had been at her father's death. But the poor little lady's obsequies were as lonely and sad as her life. She was only the wife of an absconding debtor. She had died under the roof of a woman who had seriously offended society by not taking it into her confidence.

It was a cold, rainy day; there was nothing to be gained in any respect by a wretched stand in the wet sodden grave-yard. Even the curate-in charge hurried over the service. The ceremony was so pitiably desolate that Elizabeth wept at its remembrance for many a year; and between her and Martha it was always a subject of sorrowful congratulation, that little Harry had been too ill with a sore throat to

go to the funeral; and had, therefore, not witnessed it.

The wronged have always a hope that as time passes it will put the wrong right. But it was getting toward the close of the third year, and Elizabeth's trial was no lighter. There had been variations in it. Sometime during the first year an opinion had gained ground, that she was saving in order to pay her brother's debts. As there were many in the neighborhood interested in such a project, this report met with great favor; and while the hope survived Elizabeth was graciously helped in her task of self-denial by a lifted hat, or a civil good-morning. But when two years had passed, and no meeting of the creditors had been called, hope in this direction turned to unreasonable anger.

"She must hev saved nigh unto £10,000. Why, then, doesn't she do t' right thing wi' it?"

"She sticks to t' brass like glue; and it's none hers. I'm fair cap't wi' t' old squire. I did think he were an honest man; but I've given up that notion long sin'. He knew well enough what were coming, and so he left Hallam to t' lass. It's a black shame a' through, thet it is!"—and thus does the shadow of sin stretch backward and forward; and not only wrong the living, but the dead also.

In the summer after Lady Evelyn's death the rector returned. Elizabeth did not hear of his arrival for a few days, and in those days the rector heard

many things about Elizabeth. He was pained and astonished ; and, doubtless, his manner was influenced by his feelings, although he had no intention of allowing simple gossip to prejudice him against so old a friend as Elizabeth Hallam. But she felt an alien atmosphere, and it checked and chilled her. If she had had any disposition to make a confidant of the rector, after that visit it was gone. "His sickness and the influx of new lives and new elements into his life has changed him," she thought ; "I will not tell him any thing."

On the contrary, he expected her confidence. He called upon her several times in this expectation ; but each time there was more perceptible an indefinable something which prevented it. In fact, he felt mortified by Elizabeth's reticence. People had confidently expected that Miss Hallam would explain her conduct to him ; some had even said, they were ready to resume friendly relations with her if the rector's attitude in the matter appeared to warrant it. It will easily be seen, then, that the return of her old friend, instead of dissipating the prejudice against her, deepened it.

The third year was a very hard and gloomy one. It is true, she had paid more than half of Page and Thorley's claim, and that the estate was fully as prosperous as it had ever been in her father's time. But socially she felt herself to be almost a pariah. The rich and prosperous ignored her existence ; and the

poor? Well, there was a change there that pained her equally. If she visited their cottages, and was pleasant and generous, they thought little of the grace.

"There must be summat wrong wi' her, or all t' gentlefolks wouldn't treat her like t' dirt under their feet," said one old crone, after pocketing a shilling with a courtsey.

"Ay, and she wouldn't come smilin' and talkin' here, if she'd any body else to speak to. I'm a poor woman, Betty Tibbs, but I'm decent, and I'm none set up wi' Miss' fair words—not I, indeed!" said another; and though people may not actually hear the syllables which mouth such sentiments, it seems really as if a bird of the air, or something still more subtle, did carry the matter, for the slandered person instinctively knows the slanderer.

And no word of regret or of love came from Antony to lighten the burden she was carrying. If she had only known that he was doing well, was endeavoring to redeem the past, it would have been some consolation. Phyllis, also, wrote more seldom. She had now two children and a large number of servants to care for, and her time was filled with many sweet and engrossing interests. Besides, though she fully believed in Elizabeth, she did also feel for her brother. She thought Richard, at any rate, ought to have been treated with full confidence, and half-feared that pride of her family and position was at

the bottom of Elizabeth's severance of the engagement. Human nature is full of complexities, and no one probably ever acts from one pure and simple motive, however much they may believe they do.

Martha Craven, however, was always true and gentle, and if any thing more respectful than in Elizabeth's brightest days; and for this blessing she was very grateful. And the boy grew rapidly, and was very handsome and interesting; and no malignity could darken the sweet, handsome room sort of the shady, flowery garden. However unpleasant her day among the tenants might have been, she could close her doors, and shut out the world, and feel sure of love and comfort within her own gates.

Things were in this condition in the spring of 1843. But more than £16,000 had been paid, and Elizabeth looked with clear eyes toward the end of her task. Socially, she was as far aloof as ever; perhaps more so, for during the winter she had found her courage often fail her regarding the church services. The walk was long on wet or cold days; the boy was subject to croupy sore throat; and her heart sank at the prospect of the social ordeal through which she must pass. It may be doubted whether people are really ever made better by petty slights and undeserved scorn. Elizabeth had tried the discipline for three years, and every Sabbath evening her face burned with the same anger, and her heart was full of the same resentment. So, it had often

come to pass during the winter that she had staid at home upon inclement days, and read the service to her nephew and herself, and talked with the child about the boys of the Old and New Testaments.

And it was noticeable, as indicating the thoughtful loving character of little Harry, that of all the band he envied most the lad who had given his barley loaves to the Saviour. He would listen to Elizabeth's description of the green, desert place, and the weary multitudes, and the calm evening, and then begin to wonder, in his childish words, "How the Saviour looked" at the boy—what he said to him—to fancy the smile of Jesus and the touch of the Divine hand, and following out his thought would say, softly, "How that little boy's heart must have ached when they crucified him! What would he do, aunt? Does the Bible say any more about him?"

But sweet as such Sabbaths were to both woman and child, Elizabeth knew that they deepened the unfavorable opinion about her, and she was sure that they always grieved her old friend. So, one Monday morning after an absence from church, she took the path through the park, determined to call upon him, and explain, as far as she was able, her reasons.

It was a lovely day, and the child walked by her side, or run hither and thither after a blue-bell, or a primrose; stopping sometimes behind, to watch a pair of building robins, or running on in advance after a rabbit. There was in Elizabeth's heart a certain

calm happiness, which she did not analyze, but was content to feel and enjoy. At a turn in the avenue she saw the rector approaching her, and there was something in his appearance, even in the distance, which annoyed and irritated her. "He is coming to reprove me, of course," she thought; and she mentally resolved for once, to defend herself against all assertions.

"Good-morning, Miss Hallam; I was coming to see you."

"And I was going to the rectory. As the park is so pleasant, will you return with me?"

"Yes, I will. Have you any idea why I was coming to see you?"

"I have. It was to say something unjust or cruel, I suppose. No one ever comes to see me for any other purpose."

"Whose fault is that?"

"Not mine. I have done no wrong to any one."

"What has your life been during the last three years?"

"Free from all evil. My worst enemy cannot accuse me."

"Why have you closed the hall? Given up all the kind and hospitable ways of your ancestors? Shut yourself up with one old woman?"

"Because my conscience and my heart approves what I have done, and do. Can I not live as I choose? Am I obliged to give an account of my-

self, and of my motives, to every man and woman in the parish? O! I have been cruelly, shamefully used!" she said, standing suddenly still and lifting her face, "God alone knows how cruelly and how unjustly!"

"My dear child, people know nothing of your motives."

"Then they are wicked to judge without knowledge."

"Do you not owe society something?"

"It has no right to insist that I wear my heart upon my sleeve."

"I was your father's friend; I have known you from your birth, Elizabeth Hallam—"

"Yet you listened to what every one said against me, and allowed it so far to influence you that I was conscious of it, and though I called on you purposely to seek your help and advice, your manner closed my lips. You have known me from my birth. You knew and loved my father. O, sir, could you not have trusted me? If I had been your friend's son, instead of his daughter, you would have done so! You would have said to all evil speakers, 'Mr. Hallam has doubtless just reasons for the economy he is practicing.' But because I was a woman, I was suspected; and every thing I could not explain was necessarily wicked. O, how your doubt has wounded me! What wrong it has done me! How sorry you would be if you knew the injustice you have done

the child of your old friend—the woman you baptized and confirmed, and never knew ill of!”

Standing still with her hand upon his arm she poured out her complaints with passionate earnestness; her face flushed and lifted, her eyes misty with unshed tears, her tall erect form quivering with emotion.

And as the rector looked and listened a swift change came over his face. He laid his hand upon hers. When she ceased, he answered, promptly:

“Miss Hallam, from this moment I believe in you with all my heart. I believe in the wisdom and purity of all you have done. Whatever you may do in the future I shall trust in you. Late as it is, take my sincere, my warm sympathy. If you choose to make me the sharer of your cares and sorrows, you will find me a true friend; if you think it right and best still to preserve silence, I am equally satisfied of your integrity.”

Then he put her arm within his, and talked to her so wisely and gently that Elizabeth found herself weeping soft, gracious, healing tears. She brought him once more into the squire's familiar sitting-room. She spread for him every delicacy she knew he liked. She took him all over the house and grounds, and made him see that every thing was kept in its old order. He asked no questions, and she volunteered no information. But he did not expect it at that time. It would not have been like Elizabeth Hallam

to spill over either her joys or her sorrows at the first offer of sympathy. Her nature was too self-contained for such effusiveness. But none the less the rector felt that the cloud had vanished. And he wondered that he had ever thought her capable of folly or wrong—that he had ever doubted her.

After this he was every-where her champion. He was seen going to the hall with his old regularity. He took a great liking for the child, and had him frequently at the rectory. Very soon people began to say that “Miss Hallam must hev done about t’ right thing, or t’ rector wouldn’t iver uphold her;” and no one doubted but that all had been fully explained to him.

Yet it was not until the close of the year that the subject was again named between them. The day before Christmas, a cold, snowy day, he was amazed to see Elizabeth coming through the rectory garden, fighting her way, with bent head, against the wind and snow. At first he feared Harry was ill, and he went to open the door himself in his anxiety; but one glance into her bright face dispelled his fear.

“Why, Elizabeth, whatever has brought you through such a storm as this?”

“Something pleasant. I meant to have come yesterday, but did not get what I wanted to bring to you until this morning. My dear, dear, old friend! Rejoice with me! I am a free woman again. I have paid a great debt and a just debt; one that, unpaid,

would have stained forever the name we both love and honor. O thank God with me! the Lord God of my fathers, who has strengthened my heart and my hands for the battle!"

And though she said not another word, he understood, and he touched her brow reverently, and knelt down with her, and the thin, tremulous, aged voice, and the young, joyful one, recited together the glad *benedictus*:

"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people,

"And hath raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David;

"As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began:

"That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us;

"To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant;

"The oath which he sware to our father Abraham,

"That he would grant unto us, that we, being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear,

"In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.

"And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways;

"To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins,

"Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the Dayspring from on high hath visited us,

"To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."

And Elizabeth rose up with a face radiant and peaceful; she laid upon the table £100, and said, "It

is for the poor. It is my thank-offering. I sold the bracelet my brother gave me at his marriage for it. I give it gladly with my whole heart. I have much to do yet, but in the rest of my work I can ask you for advice and sympathy. It will be a great help and comfort. Will you come to the hall after Christmas and speak with me, or shall I come here and see you?"

"I will come to the hall; for I have a book for Harry, and I wish to give it to him myself."

The result of this interview was that the rector called upon the firm of Whaley Brothers, and that the elder Whaley called upon Elizabeth. He attempted some apology at first, but she graciously put it aside: "There has been a mistake, Mr. Whaley. Let it pass. I wish you to communicate with all the creditors of the late firm of Antony Hallam. Every shilling is to be paid and the income of the estate will be devoted to it, with the exception of the home farm, the rental of which I will reserve for my own necessities, and for keeping Hallam in order."

And to Martha Elizabeth said: "We are going to live a little more like the hall now, Martha. You shall have two girls to help you, and Peter Crag shall bring a pony for Harry, and we'll be as happy as never was again! We have had a bit of dark, hard road to go over, but the end of it has come. Thank God!"

"It's varry few as find any road through life an

easy one; t' road to heaven is by Weeping Cross, Miss Hallam."

"I don't know why that should be, Martha. If any have reason to sing, as they go through life, they should be the children of the King."

"It's t' sons o' t' King that hev t' battles to fight and t' prayers to offer, and t' sacrifices to mak' for a t' rest o' t' world, I think. What made John Wesley, and the men like him, be up early and late, be stoned by mobs, and perish'd wi' cold and hunger? Not as they needed to do it for their own profit, but just because they were the sons o' t' King, they couldn't help it. Christians mustn't complain of any kind o' a road that tak's 'em home."

"But sometimes, Martha, it seems as if the other road was so smooth and pleasant."

"Two roads are a bit different—t' road to Babylon and t' road to Jerusalem aren't t' same. You may go dancin' along t' first; the last is often varry narrow and steep."

"But one can't help wondering why."

"If it wasn't narrow, and varry narrow, too, Miss Hallam, fenced in, and watchmen set all along it, we'd be strayin' far and near, and ivery one o' us going our own way. There isn't a church I knows of—not even t' people called Methodists—as mak's it narrow enough to prevent lost sheep. But it isn't all t' Hill o' Difficulty, Miss Hallam. It isn't fair to say that. There's many an arbor on t' hill-side,

and many a House Beautiful, and whiles we may bide a bit wi' t' shepherds on t' Delectable Mountains. And no soul need walk alone on it. That's t' glory and t' comfort! And many a time we're strengthened, and many a time we're carried a bit by unseen hands."

"Well, Martha, those are pleasant thoughts to sleep on, and to-morrow—to-morrow will be another day."

"And a good one, Miss Hallam; anyhow, them as bodes good are t' likeliest to get it. I do think that."

So Elizabeth went to sleep full of pleasant hopes and aims. It had always been her intention to pay every penny that Antony Hallam owed; and she felt a strange sense of delight and freedom in the knowledge that the duty had begun. Fortunately, she had in this sense of performed duty all the reward she asked or expected, for if it had not satisfied her, she would have surely been grieved and disappointed with the way the information was generally received. No one is ever surprised at a bad action, but a good one makes human nature at once look for a bad motive for it.

"She's found out that it wont pay her to hold on to other folks' money. Why-a! nobody notices her, and nivver a sweetheart comes her way."

"I thought we'd bring her to terms, if we nobbut made it hot enough for her. Bless you, Josiah! women folks can't live without their cronying and companying."

"It's nobbut right she should pay ivery penny, and I tell'd her so last time I met her on Hallam Common."

"Did ta? Why, thou hed gumption! Whativer did she say to thee?"

"She reddened up like t' old squire used to, and her eyes snapped like two pistols; and says she, 'Marmaduke Halcroft, you'll get every farthing o' your money when I get ready to pay it.'"

"Thank you, miss," says I, "all the same, I'll be bold to mention that I've waited going on five years for it."

"'And you may wait five years longer, for there are others besides you,' says she, as peacocky as any thing, 'but you'll get it;' and wi' that, she laid her whip across her mare in a way as made me feel it were across my face, and went away so quick I couldn't get another word in. But women will hev t' last word, if they die for 't."

"If she'll pay t' brass, she can hev as many words as she wants; I'm none flayed for any woman's tongue—not I, indeed."

And these sentiments, expressed in forms more or less polite, were the prevailing ones regarding Miss Hallam's tardy acknowledgment of the debt of Hallam to the neighborhood. Many were the discussions in fashionable drawing-rooms as to the propriety of rewarding the justice of Elizabeth's action, by bows, or smiles, or calls. But privately few peo-

ple were really inclined, as yet, to renew civilities with her. They argued, in their own hearts, that during the many years of retrenchment she could not afford to return hospitalities on a scale of equivalent splendor; and, in fact, poverty is offensive to wealth, and they had already treated Miss Hallam badly, and, therefore, disliked her. It was an irritation to have the disagreeable subject forced upon their attention at all. If she had assumed her brother's debts at the time of his failure, they were quite sure they would have honored her, however poor she had left herself. But humanity has its statutes of limitation even for good deeds; every one decided that Elizabeth had become honorable and honest too late.

And for once the men were as hard as their wives. They had resented the fact of a woman being set among the ranks of great English squires; but having been put there, they expected from her virtues of far more illustrious character than they would have demanded from a man. "For whatever can a woman need wi' so much brass?" asked Squire Horton, indignantly. "She doesn't hunt, and she can't run for t' county, and what better could she hev done than clear an old Yorkshire name o' its dirty trade stain. I'll lay a five-pound note as Squire Henry left her all for t' varry purpose. He nivver thought much o' his son Antony's fine schemes."

"There's them as thinks he left her Hallam to prevent Antony wearing it on his creditors."

"There's them thet thinks evil o' God Almighty himsen, Thomas Baxter. Henry Hallam was a gentleman to t' bone. He'd hev paid ivery shilling afore this if he'd been alive. Yorkshire squires like their own, but they don't want what belongs to other folk; not they. Squire Hallam was one o' t' best of us. He was that."

And though Elizabeth had expected nothing better from her neighbors, their continued coldness hurt her. Who of us is there that has not experienced that painful surprise that the repulsion of others awakens in our hearts? We feel kindly to them, but they draw back their hand from us; an antipathy estranges them, they pass us by. What avail is it to tell them that appearances deceive, that calumny has done us wrong? What good is it to defend ourself, when no one cares to listen? when we are condemned before we have spoken? Nothing is so cruel as prejudice; she is blind and deaf; she shuts her eyes purposely, that she may stab boldly; for she knows, if she were to look honestly at her victim, she could not do it.

But O, it is from these desolate places that heart-cry comes which brings God out of his sanctuary, which calls Jesus to our side to walk there with us. It is in the deserts we have met angels. A great trial is almost a necessity for a true Christian life; for faith needs a soil that has been deeply plowed. The seed cast upon the surface rarely finds the circum-

stances that are sufficient for its development. And blessed also are those souls to whom the "long watches" of sorrow are given! It is a great soul that is capable of long-continued suffering, and that can bring to it day after day a heart at once submissive and energetic and all vibrating with hope.

Yet it may be fairly said that Elizabeth Hallam was now upon this plane. Her road was still rough, but she was traveling in the daylight, strong and cheerful, and very happy in the added pleasure of her life. Her five years of enforced poverty had taught her simple habits. She felt rich with the £800 yearly rental of the home farm. And it was such a delight to have Harry ride by her side; she was so proud of the fair, bright boy. She loved him so dearly. He had just begun to study two hours every day with the curate, and to the two women at the hall it was a great event every morning to watch him away to the village on his pony, with his books in a leather strap hung at his saddle-bow. They followed him with their eyes until a turn in the road hid the white nag and the little figure in a blue velvet suit upon it from them. For it was Elizabeth's pride to dress the child daintily and richly as the "young squire of Hallam" ought to dress. She cut up gladly her own velvets for that purpose, and Martha considered the clear-starching of his lace collars and ruffles one of her most important duties.

One morning, at the close of January, Elizabeth had

to go to the village, and she told Harry when his lessons were finished to wait at the curate's until she called for him. It was an exquisite day; cold, but clear and sunny, and there was a particular joy in rapid riding on such a morning. They took a circuitous route home, a road which led them through lonely country lanes and across some fields. The robins were singing a little, and the wrens twittering about the hawthorn berries on the bare hedges. Elizabeth and Harry rode rapidly, their horses' feet and their merry laughter making a cheery racket in the lanes. They reached the hall gates in a glow of spirits. Martha was standing there, her round rosy face all smiles. She said little to Elizabeth, but she whispered something to Harry, and took him away with her.

"Martha! Martha!" cried Elizabeth, "you will spoil the boy, and make him sick. What dainty have you ready for him? Cannot I share it? I am hungry enough, I can tell you!"

Martha laughed and shook her head, and Elizabeth, after a word to the groom, went into the parlor. The angels that loved her must have followed her there. They would desire to see her joy. For there, with glowing, tender face, stood Richard. She asked no questions. She spoke no word at all. She went straight to the arms outstretched to clasp her. She felt his tears mingling with her own. She heard her name break softly in two the kisses that said what

no words could say. She knew that she had found at last the hour for which she had hoped and prayed so many years.

And Richard could hardly believe in his joy. This splendid Elizabeth of twenty-eight, in all the glory and radiance of her calmed and chastened soul, and her perfected womanhood, was infinitely more charming and lovable than he had ever seen her before. He told her so in glad and happy words, and Elizabeth listened, proud and well-contented with his praise. For an hour he would not suffer her to leave him; yes, it took him an hour, to tell her how well she looked in her riding-dress.

Neither of them spoke of the events which had separated or re-united them. It was enough that they were together. They perfectly trusted each other without explanations. Those could come afterward, but this day was too fair for any memory of sorrow. When Elizabeth came down to dinner she found Harry standing at Richard's knee, explaining to him the lessons he was studying. Her eyes took in with light the picture—the thoughtful gentleness of the dark head, the rosy face of the fair-haired boy.

“I have been showing the gentleman my new book, aunt;” then he bowed to Richard, and, gently removing himself from his arm, went to his aunt's side.

“He says he is called Henry Hallam.”

“Yes, he is my brother's only child.”

And Richard dropped his eyes ; and, turning the subject, said, "I called at the rector's as I came here. He insists upon my staying with him, Elizabeth. He says the hall is not prepared for visitors."

"I think he is right, Richard."

"I brought him a likeness of Phyllis and her husband. I have a similar gift for you."

"No one will prize them more. When did you see Phyllis?"

"A month ago. She is well and happy. John is a member of the Legislature this year. He seems to vibrate between the Senate and the frontier. He is a fine fellow, and they are doing well."

Then they fell into talking of Texas and of the disastrous Santa Fé expedition ; and Harry listened with blazing eyes to the tale of cruelty and wrong. Then the rector came and Elizabeth made tea for her guests, and after a happy evening, she watched them walk away together over the familiar road, down the terraces, and across the park. And she went to her room and sat down, silent with joy, yet thinking thoughts that were thanksgivings, and lifting up her heart in speechless gratitude and adoration.

By and by Martha came to her. "I couldn't frame mysen to sleep to-night, Miss Hallam, till I said a word to you. God gave you a glad surprise this morning ; that's his way mostly. Hev you noticed that great blessings come when we are nivver expecting 'em?"

"No, I don't think I have; and why should they?"

"I hev my own thoughts about it. Mebbe it isnt allays as easy for God's angels to do *his will* as we think for. T' devil hes angels too, princes and powers o' evil; and I shouldn't wonder if they took a deal o' pleasure in makkin good varry hard to do."

"What makes you think such a strange thing as that?"

"Why-a! I could tell you what looks uncommon like it out o' my own life; but you may tak' your Bible and find it plain as t' alphabet can put it, Miss Hallam. Turn up t' tenth chapter o' t' book o' t' prophet Daniel, and read t' twelfth and thirteenth verses out to me." Then, as Martha stood watching and waiting, with a bright expectant face, Elizabeth lifted the book, and read,

"'Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me.'"

"Yet he was an angel, Miss Hallam, whose face was like lightning, and his eyes like lamps o' fire, and his arms and feet like polished brass, and his voice like the voice of a multitude."

"Then you think, Martha, that the Bible teaches

us that evil as well as good angels interfere in human life?"

"Ay, I'm sure it does, Miss Hallam. If God is said to open t' eyes o' our understanding, t' devil is said to blind 'em. Are Christians filled wi' t' Spirit o' God? 'Why,' said Peter to Ananias, 'Why hath Satan filled thy heart?' Does God work in us to will and to do? T' devil also works in t' children o' disobedience. What do you mak' o' that now?"

"I think it is a very solemn consideration. I have often thought of good angels around me; but we may well 'work out our salvation with fear and trembling,' if evil ones are waiting to hinder us at every turn."

"And you see, then, how even good angels may hev to be varry prudent about t' blessings they hev on t' road to us. So they come as surprises. I don't think it's iver well, even wi' oursel's, to blow a trumpet before any thing we're going to do. After we hev got t' good thing, after we hev done t' great thing, it'll be a varry good time to talk about it. Many a night I've thought o' t' words on my little Wesley tea-pot, and just said 'em softly, down in my heart, 'In God we trust.' But to-night I hev put a bit o' holly all around it, and I hev filled it full o' t' freshest greens and flowers I could get, and I s'all stand boldly up before it, and say out loud—'In God we trust!'"

CHAPTER X.

"When we have hoped and sought and striven and lost our aim, then the truth fronts us, beaming out of the darkness."

"Speaking of things remembered, and so sit
Speechless while things forgotten call to us."

"We who say as we go,
'Strange to think by the way,
Whatever there is to know,
That we shall know one day.'"

"I WOULD tell her every thing."

It was the rector who spoke. He and Richard were sitting before the study fire; they had been talking long and seriously, and the rector's eyes were dim and troubled. "Yes, I would tell her every thing." Then he put his pipe down, and began to walk about the floor, murmuring at intervals, "Poor fellow! poor fellow! God is merciful."

In accord with this advice Richard went to see Elizabeth. It was a painful story he had to tell, and he was half inclined to hide all but the unavoidable in his own heart; but he could not doubt the wisdom which counseled him "to tell all, and tell it as soon as possible." The opportunity occurred immediately. He found Elizabeth mending, with skillful fingers, some fine old lace, which she was going to make into ruffles for Harry's neck and wrists. It was a stormy

morning, and the boy had not been permitted to go to the village, but he sat beside her, reading aloud that delight of boyhood, "Robinson Crusoe." Elizabeth had never removed her mourning, but her fair hair and white linen collar and cuffs made an exquisite contrast to the soft somber folds of her dress; while Harry was just a bit of brilliant color, from the tawny gold of his long curls to the rich lights of his crimson velvet suit, with its white lace and snowy hose, and low shoes tied with crimson ribbons.

He was a trifle jealous of Richard's interference between himself and his aunt, but far too gentlemanly a little fellow to show it; and quite shrewd enough to understand, that if he went to Martha for an hour or two, he would not be much missed. They both followed him with admiring eyes as he left the room; and when he stood a moment in the open door and touched his brow with his hand, as a parting courtesy, neither could help an expression of satisfaction.

"What a handsome lad!" said Richard.

"He is. If he live to take his father's or my place here, he will be a noble squire of Hallam."

"Then he is to be your successor?"

"Failing Antony."

"Then, Elizabeth dear, he is squire of Hallam already, for Antony is dead."

"Dead! Without a word! Without sign of any kind—O, Richard, is it really—death?"

Richard bowed his head, and Elizabeth sat gazing out of the window with vacant introspective vision, trying to call up from the past the dear form that would come no more. She put down her sewing, and Richard drew closer to her side, and comforted her with assurances that he believed, "all was well with the dead." "I was with him during the last weeks of his sad life," he said; "I did all that love could suggest to soothe his sufferings. He sleeps well; believe me."

"I never heard from him after our sorrowful farewell. I looked and hoped for a little until my heart failed me; and I thought he perished at sea."

"No; God's mercy spared him until he had proved the vanity of all earthly ambition, and then he gave him rest. When he awoke, I have no doubt that 'he was satisfied.'"

"Where did he die? Tell me all, Richard, for there may be words and events that seem trivial to you that will be full of meaning to me."

"Last March I went to Mexico on business of importance, and passing one morning through the Grand Plaza, I thought a figure slowly sauntering before me was a familiar one. It went into a small office for the exchange of foreign money, and, as I wanted some exchange, I followed. To my surprise the man seemed to be the proprietor; he went behind the counter into a room, but on my touching a bell reappeared. It was Antony. The moment our eyes

met, we recognized each other, and after a slight hesitation, I am sure that he was thankful and delighted to see me. I was shocked at his appearance. He looked fifty years of age, and had lost all his color, and was extremely emaciated. We were soon interrupted, and he promised to come to my hotel and dine with me at six o'clock.

"I noticed at dinner that he ate very little, and that he had a distressing and nearly constant cough, and afterward, as we sat on the piazza, I said, 'Let us go inside, Antony; there is a cold wind, and you have a very bad cough.'

"'O, it is nothing,' he answered fretfully. 'The only wonder is that I am alive, after all I have been made to suffer. Stronger men than I ever was fell and died at my side. You are too polite, Richard, to ask me where I have been; but if you wish to hear, I should like to tell you.'

"I answered, 'You are my friend and my brother, Antony; and whatever touches you for good or for evil touches me also. I should like to hear all you wish to tell me.'

"'It is all evil, Richard. You would hear from Elizabeth that I was obliged to leave England?'

"'Yes, she told me.'

"'How long have you been married?' he asked me, sharply; and when I said, 'We are not married; Elizabeth wrote and said she had a duty to perform which might bind her for many years to it, and it

alone,' your brother seemed to be greatly troubled; and asked, angrily, 'And you took her at her word, and left her in her sorrow alone? Richard, I did not think you would have been so cruel!' And, my darling, it was the first time I had thought of our separation in that light. I attempted no excuses to Antony, and, after a moment's reflection, he went on:

"I left Whitehaven in a ship bound for Havana, and I remained in that city until the spring of 1841. But I never liked the place, and I removed to New Orleans at that time. I had some idea of seeing you, and opening my whole heart to you; but I lingered day after day unable to make up my mind. At the hotel where I stayed there were a number of Texans coming and going, and I was delighted with their bold, frank ways, and with the air of conquest and freedom and adventure that clung to them. One day I passed you upon Canal Street. You looked so miserable, and were speaking to the man with whom you were in conversation so sternly, that I could not make up my mind to address you. I walked a block and returned. You were just saying, "If I did right, I would send you to the Penitentiary, sir;" and I had a sudden fear of you, and, returning to the hotel, I packed my valise and took the next steamer for Galveston.'

"I answered, 'I remember the morning, Antony; the man had stolen from me a large sum of money. I was angry with him, and I had a right to be angry.'

“Antony frowned, and for some minutes did not resume his story. He looked so faint, also, that I pushed a little wine and water toward him, and he wet his lips, and went on:

““Yes, you had a perfect right; but your manner checked me. I did not know either how matters stood between you and my sister; so, instead of speaking to you, I went to Texas. I found Houston—I mean the little town of that name—in a state of the greatest excitement. The tradesmen were working night and day, shoeing horses, or mending rifles and pistols; and the saddlers’ shops were besieged for leathern pouches and saddlery of all kinds. The streets were like a fair. Of course, I caught the enthusiasm. It was the Santa Fè expedition, and I threw myself into it heart and soul. I was going as a trader, and I hastened forward, with others similarly disposed, to Austin, loaded two wagons with merchandise of every description, and left with the expedition in June.

““You know what ■ disastrous failure it was. We fell into the hands of the Mexicans by the blackest villainy; through the treachery of a companion in whom we all put perfect trust, and who had pledged us his Masonic faith that if we gave up our arms we should be allowed eight days to trade, and then have them returned, with permission to go back to Austin in peace. But once disarmed, our wagons and goods were seized, we were stripped of every thing, tied six

or eight in a lariat, and sent, with a strong military escort to Mexico.

“Try to imagine, Richard, what we felt in prospect of this walk of two thousand miles, through deserts, and over mountains, driven, like cattle, with a pint of meal each night for food, and a single blanket to cover us in the bitterest cold. Strong men fell down dead at my side, or, being too exhausted to move, were shot and left to the wolves and carrion; our guard merely cutting off the poor fellows' ears, as evidence that they had not escaped. The horrors of that march were unspeakable.’

“You said I was to tell you all—shall I go on, Elizabeth?”

She lifted her eyes, and whispered, “Go on; I must hear all, or how can I feel all? O. Antony! Antony!”

“I shall never forget his face, Elizabeth. Anger, pity, suffering, chased each other over it, till his eyes filled and his lips quivered. I did not speak. Every word I could think of seemed so poor and commonplace; but I bent forward and took his hands, and he saw in my face what I could not say, and for a minute or two he lost control of himself, and wept like a child.

“‘Not for myself, Richard;’ he said, ‘no, I was thinking of that awful march across the “Dead Man’s Journey,” a savage, thorny desert of ninety miles, destitute of water. We were driven through it with-

out food and without sleep. My companion was a young man of twenty, the son of a wealthy Alabamian planter. I met him in Austin, so bright and bold, so full of eager, loving life, so daring, and so hopeful; but his strength had been failing for two days ere he came to the desert. His feet were in a pitiable condition. He was sleeping as he walked. Then he became delirious, and talked constantly of his father and mother and sisters. He had been too ill to fill his canteen before starting; his thirst soon became intolerable; I gave him all my water, I begged from others a few spoonfuls of their store, I held him up as long as I was able; but at last, at last, he dropped. Richard! Richard! They shot him before my eyes, shot him with the cry of 'Christ' upon his lips. I think my anger supported me, I don't know else how I bore it, but I was mad with horror and rage at the brutal cowards.

" 'When I reached the end of my journey I was imprisoned with some of my comrades, first in a lazaretto, among lepers, in every stage of their loathsome disease; and afterward removed to Santiago, where, hampered with heavy chains, we were set to work upon the public roads.'

"I asked him why he did not apply to the British consul, and he said, 'I had a reason for not doing so, Richard. I may tell you the reason sometime, but not to-night. I knew that there was diplomatic correspondence going on about our relief, and that, soon

or later, those who survived their brutal treatment would be set free. I was one that lived to have my chains knocked off ; but I was many weeks sick afterward, and, indeed, I have not recovered yet.'

"So you began the exchange business here?"

"Yes ; I had saved through all my troubles a little store of gold in a belt around my waist. It was not much, but I have more than doubled it ; and as soon as I can, I intend leaving Mexico, and beginning life again among civilized human beings.'"

Elizabeth was weeping bitterly, but she said, "I am glad you have told me this, Richard. Ah, my brave brother ! You showed in your extremity the race from which you sprung ! Sydney's deed was no greater than yours ! That 'Dead Man's Journey,' Richard, redeems all to me. I am proud of Antony at last. I freely forgive him every hour of sorrow he has caused me. His picture shall be hung next his father's, and I will have all else forgotten but this one deed. He gave his last drink of water to the boy perishing at his side ; he begged for him when his own store failed, he supported him when he could scarcely walk himself, and had tears and righteous anger for the wrongs of others ; but for his own sufferings no word of complaint ! After this, Richard, I do not fear what else you have to tell me. Did he die in Mexico?"

"No ; he was very unhappy in the country, and he longed to leave it. As the weather grew warmer his weakness and suffering increased ; but it was a hard

thing for him to admit that he was seriously ill. At last he was unable to attend to his business, and I persuaded him to close his office. I shall never forget his face as he turned the key in it; I think he felt then that life for him was over. I had remained in Mexico for some weeks entirely on his account, and I now suggested, as he had no business cares, a journey home by way of Texas. I really believed that the rare, fine air of the prairies would do him good; and I was sure if we could reach Phyllis, he would at least die among friends.

“When I made the proposal he was eager as a child for it. He did not want to delay an hour. He remembered the ethereal, vivifying airs of Western Texas, and was quite sure if he could only breathe them again he would be well in a short time. He was carried in a litter to Vera Cruz, and then taken by sea to Brownsville. And really the journey seemed to greatly revive him, and I could not help joining in his belief that Phyllis and Western Texas would save him.

“But when we reached the Basque there was a sudden change, a change there was no mistaking. He was unable to proceed, and I laid his mattress under a great live oak whose branches overshadowed space enough for our camp. I cannot tell you, Elizabeth, what a singular stillness and awe settled over all of us. I have often thought and wondered about it since. There was no quarreling, no singing, nor laugh-

ing among the men, who were usually ready enough for any of them; and this 'still' feeling, I suppose, was intensified by the weather, and the peculiar atmosphere. For we had come by such slow stages, that it was Indian summer, and if you can imagine an English October day, spiritualized, and wearing a veil of exquisite purply-grey and amber haze, you may have some idea of the lovely melancholy of these dying days of the year on the prairie.

"We waited several days in this place, and he grew very weak, suffering much, but always suffering patiently and with a brave cheerfulness that was inexpressibly sorrowful. It was on a Sunday morning that he touched me just between the dawn and the daylight, and said, 'Richard, I have been dreaming of Hallam and of my mother. She is waiting for me. I will sleep no more in this world. It is a beautiful world!' During the day I never left him, and we talked a great deal about the future, whose mystery he was so soon to enter. Soon after sunset he whispered to me the wrong he had done, and which he was quite sure you were retrieving. He acknowledged that he ought to have told me before, but pleaded his weakness and his dread of losing the only friend he had. It is needless to say I forgave him, forgave him for you and for myself; and did it so heartily, that before I was conscious of the act I had stooped and kissed him.

"About midnight he said to me, 'Pray, Richard;'

and surely I was helped to do so, for crowding into my memory came every blessed promise, every comforting hope, that could make the hour of death the hour of victory. And while I was saying, 'Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world,' he passed away. We were quite alone. The men were sleeping around, unconscious of 'Him that waited.' The moon flooded the prairie with a soft, hazy light, and all was so still that I could hear the cattle in the distance cropping the grass. I awoke no one. The last offices I could do for him I quietly performed, and then sat down to watch until daylight. All was very happy and solemn. It was as if the Angel of Peace had passed by. And as if to check any doubt or fear I might be tempted to indulge, suddenly, and swift and penetrating as light, these lines came to my recollection :

" 'Down in the valley of Death,
A Cross is standing plain ;
Where strange and awful the shadows sleep,
And the ground has a deep, red stain.

" 'This Cross uplifted there
Forbids, with voice divine,
Our anguish'd hearts to break for the dead
Who have died and made no sign.

" 'As they turned away from us,
Dear eyes that were heavy and dim,
May have met His look who was lifted there,
May be sleeping safe in Him.' "

"Where did you bury him, Richard ?"

"Under the tree. Not in all the world could we

have found for him so lovely and so still a grave. Just at sunrise we laid him there, 'in sure and certain hope' of the resurrection. One of the Mexicans cut a cross and placed it at his head, and, rude and ignorant as they all were, I believe every one said a prayer for his repose. Then I took the little gold he had, divided it among them, paid them their wages, and let them return home. I waited till all the tumult of their departure was over, then I, too, silently lifted my hat in a last 'farewell.' It was quite noon then, and the grave lay in a band of sunshine—a very pleasant grave to remember, Elizabeth."

She was weeping unrestrainedly, and Richard let her weep. Such rain softens and fertilizes the soul, and leaves a harvest of blessedness behind. And when the first shock was over, Elizabeth could almost rejoice for the dead; for Antony's life had been set to extremes—great ambitions and great failures—and few, indeed, are the spirits so finely touched as to walk with even balance between them. Therefore for the mercy that had released him from the trials and temptations of life, there was gratitude to be given, for it was due.

That night, when Martha brought in Elizabeth's candle, she said: "Martha, my brother is dead. Master Harry is now the young squire. You will see that this is understood by every one."

"God love him! And may t' light o' *his* countenance be forever on him!"

"And if any ask about Mr. Antony, you may say that he died in Texas."

"That is where Mrs. Millard lives?"

"Yes, Mrs. Millard lives in Texas. Mr. Antony died of consumption. O, Martha! sit down, I must tell you all about him;" and Elizabeth went over the pitiful story, and talked about it, until both women were weary with weeping. The next morning they hung Antony's picture between that of his father and mother. It had been taken just after his return from college, in the very first glory of his youthful manhood, and Elizabeth looked fondly at it, and linked it only with memories of their happy innocent childhood, and with the grand self-abnegation of "the dead man's journey."

The news of Antony's death caused a perceptible reaction in popular feeling. The young man, after a hard struggle with adverse fate, had paid the last debt, and the great debt. Good men refrain from judging those who have gone to God's tribunal. Even his largest creditors evinced a disposition to take, with consideration, their claim, as the estate could pay it; and some willingness to allow at last, "thet Miss Hallam hed done t' right thing." The fact of the Whaley Brothers turning her defenders rather confounded them. They had a profound respect for "t' Whaleys;" and if "t' Whaleys were for backin' up Miss Hallam's ways," the majority were sure that Miss Hallam's ways were such as com-

mended themselves to "men as stood firm for t' law and t' land o' England." With any higher test they did not trouble themselves.

The public recognition of young Harry Hallam as the future squire also gave great satisfaction. After all, no stranger and foreigner was to have rule over them; for Richard they certainly regarded in that light. "He might be a Hallam to start wi'," said Peter Crag, "but he's been that way mixed up wi' French and such, thet t' Hallam in him is varry hard to find." All the tenants, upon the advent of Richard, had stood squarely upon their dignity; they had told each other that they'd pay rent only to a Hallam, and they had quite determined to resent any suggestion made by Richard, and to disregard any order he gave.

But it was quickly evident that Richard did not intend to take any more interest in Hallam than he did in the Church glebe and tithes, and that the only thing he desired was the bride he had waited so long for. The spring was far advanced, however, before the wedding-day was fixed; for there was much to provide for, and many things to arrange, in view of the long-continued absences which would be almost certain. The Whaleys, urged by a lover, certainly hurried their work to a degree which astonished all their subordinates; but yet February had passed before all the claims against Antony Hallam had been collected. The debt, as debt always is, was larger than had

been expected; and twelve years' income would be exhausted in its liquidation. Elizabeth glanced at Harry and looked gravely at the papers; but Richard said, "Be satisfied, dear. He will have the income at the age he really needs it—when he begins his university career—until then we can surely care for him."

So Hallam was left, financially, in the Whaleys' care. They were to collect all its revenues, and keep the house and grounds in repair, and, after paying all expenses incidental to this duty, they were to divide, in fair proportions, the balance every three years among Antony's creditors. This arrangement gave perfect satisfaction, for, as Marmaduke Halcroft said, "If t' Whaleys ar'n't to be trusted, t' world might as well stand still, and let honest men get out o' it."

As to the house, it was to be left absolutely in Martha's care. Inside its walls her authority was to be undisputed, and Elizabeth insisted that her salary should be on the most liberal basis. In fact, Martha's position made her a person of importance—a woman who could afford to do handsomely toward her chapel, and who might still have put by a large sum every year.

The wedding was a very pretty one, and Elizabeth, in her robe of white satin and lace, with pearls around her throat and arms, was a most lovely bride. Twelve young girls, daughters of her tenants, dressed in white, and carrying handfuls of lilies-of-the-valley,

went with her to the altar ; and Richard had for his attendant the handsome little squire. The rector took the place of Elizabeth's father, and a neighboring clergyman performed the ceremony. Most of the surrounding families were present in the church, and with this courtesy Elizabeth was quite satisfied. Immediately after the marriage they left for Liverpool, and when they arrived at Richard's home it was in the time of orange blooms and building birds, as he had desired it should be, six years before.

But one welcome which they would gladly have heard was wanting. Bishop Elliott had removed, and no other preacher had taken his place in Richard's home. This was caused, however, by the want of some womanly influence as a conductor. It was Phyllis who had brought the kindred souls together, and made pleasant places for them to walk and talk in. Phyllis had desired very much to meet Elizabeth, on her advent into her American life, but the time had been most uncertain, and so many other duties held the wife and mother and mistress, that it had been thought better to defer the pleasure till it could be more definitely arranged. And then, after all, it was Elizabeth that went to see Phyllis. One day Richard came home in a hurry.

"Elizabeth ! I am going to Texas — to Austin. Suppose you and Harry go with me. We will give Phyllis a surprise."

"But housekeepers don't like surprises, Richard."

"Then we will write before leaving, but I doubt if the letter will be in advance of us."

It was not. John Millard's home was a couple of miles distant from Austin, and the mail was not gone for with any regularity. Besides, at this time, John was attending to his duties in the Legislature, and Phyllis relied upon his visits to the post-office.

It was a pleasant afternoon in June when the stage deposited them in the beautiful city, and after some refreshment Richard got a buggy and determined to drive out to the Millard place. Half a mile distant from it they met a boy about seven years old on a mustang, and Richard asked him if he could direct him to Captain Millard's house.

"I reckon so," said the little chap, with a laugh; "I generally stop there, if I'm not on horseback."

"O, indeed! What is your name?"

"My name is Richard Millard. What's your name, sir?"

"My name is Richard Fontaine; and I shouldn't wonder if you are my nephew."

"I'm about certain you are my uncle. And is that my English aunt? Wont ma be glad? Say, wont you hurry up? I was going into the city. My pa's going to speak to-night. Did you ever hear my pa speak?"

"No; but I should like to do so."

"I should think you would. See! There's ma.

That is Lulu hanging on to her, and that is Sam Houston in her arms. My pony is called 'San Jacinto.' Say! Who is that with you and aunt, Uncle Richard? I mean *you*;" and he nodded and smiled at Harry.

"That is Harry Hallam—a relation of yours."

"I'm glad of that. Would he like to ride my pony?"

"Yes," answered Harry, promptly.

But Richard declined to make exchanges just there, especially as they could see Phyllis curiously watching their approach. In another moment she had given Sam Houston to a negro nurse, flung a sun-bonnet on her head, and was tripping to the gate to meet them.

"O how glad I am, Elizabeth! I knew you the minute I saw the tip of your hat, Richard! And this is Harry Hallam! Come in, come in; come with ten thousand welcomes!"

What a merry household it was! What a joyous, plentiful, almost out-of-doors meal was ready in half an hour! And then, as soon as the sun set, Phyllis said, "Now, if you are not tired, we will go and surprise John. He is to speak to-night, and I make a point of listening to him, in the capitol."

Richard and Elizabeth were pleased with the proposal; but Harry desired to stay with young Millard. The boys had fraternized at once,—what good boys do not? especially when there are ponies and

rabbits and puppies and pigeons to exhibit, and talk about.

Phyllis had matured into a very beautiful woman, and Richard was proud of both his sister and his wife, when he entered the Texas capitol with them. It was a stirring scene he saw, and certainly a gathering of manhood of a very exceptional character. The lobbies were full of lovely, brilliant women; and scattered among them—chatting, listening, love-making—was many a well-known hero, on whose sun-browned face the history of Texas was written. The matter in dispute did not much interest Elizabeth, but she listened with amusement to a conversation between Phyllis and pretty Betty Lubbock about the latter's approaching wedding, and her trip to the "States."

In the middle of a description of the bridal dress, there fell upon her ears these words: "A bill for the relief of the Millard Rangers." She looked eagerly to see who would rise. It was only a prosy old man who opposed the measure, on the ground that the State could not afford to protect such a far-outlying frontier.

"Perish the State that cannot protect her citizens!" cried a vehement voice from another seat, and forthwith leaped to his feet Captain John Millard. Elizabeth had never seen him, but she knew, from Phyllis's sudden silence, and the proud light in her face, who it was. He talked as he fought, with all his soul, a

very Rupert in debate, as he was in battle. In three minutes all whispering had ceased; women listened with full eyes, men with glowing cheeks; and when he sat down the bill was virtually passed by acclamation. Phyllis was silently weeping, and not, perhaps, altogether for the slaughtered women and children on the frontier; there were a few proud, happy tears for interests nearer home.

Then came John's surprise, and the happy ride home, and many and many a joyful day after it—a month of complete happiness, of days devoid of care, and filled with perfect love and health and friendship, and made beautiful with the sunshine and airs of an earthly paradise. Phyllis's home was a roomy wooden house, spreading wide, as every thing does in Texas, with doors and windows standing open, and deep piazzas on every side. Behind it was a grove of the kingly magnolia, in front the vast shadows of the grand pecans. Greenest turf was under them; and there was, besides, a multitude of flowers, and vines which trailed up the lattices of the piazzas, and over the walls and roofs, and even dropped in at the chamber windows.

There was there, also, the constant stir of happy servants, laughing and singing at their work, of playing children, of trampling horses, of the coming and going of guests; for Captain Millard's house was near a great highway, and was known far and wide for its hospitality. The stranger fastened his

horse at the fence, and asked undoubtingly for a cup of coffee, or a glass of milk, and Phyllis had a pleasant word and a cheerful meal for every caller; so that John rarely wanted company when he sat in the cool and silence of the evening. It might be a ranger from the Pecos, or a trader from the Rio Grande, or a land speculator from the States, or an English gentleman on his travels, or a Methodist missionary doing his circuit; yea, sometimes half a dozen travelers and sojourners met together there, and then they talked and argued and described until the "night turned," and the cocks were crowing for the dawning.

Richard thoroughly enjoyed the life, and Elizabeth's nature expanded in it, as a flower in sunshine. What gallops she had on the prairies! What rambles with Phyllis by the creek sides in search of strange flowers! What sweet confidences! What new experiences! What a revelation altogether of a real, fresh, natural life it was! And she saw with her own eyes, and with a kind of wonder, the men who had dared to be free, and to found a republic of free men in the face of nine million Mexicans—men of iron wills, who under rude felt hats had the finest heads, and under buckskin vests the warmest hearts. Phyllis was always delighted to point them out, to tell over again their exploits, and to watch the kindling of the heroic fire in Elizabeth's eyes.

It was, indeed, a wonderful month, and the last

day of it was marked by a meeting that made a deep impression upon Elizabeth. She was dressing in the afternoon when she heard a more than usually noisy arrival. Looking out of the window she saw a man unsaddling his horse, and a crowd of negroes running to meet him. It seemed, also, as if every one of John's forty-two dogs was equally delighted at the visit. Such a barking! Such a chorus of welcome! Such exclamations of satisfaction it is impossible to describe. The new-comer was a man of immense stature, evidently more used to riding than to walking. For his gait was slouching, his limbs seemed to dangle about him, and he had a lazy, listless stoop, as he came up the garden with his saddle over his arm, listening to a score of voices, patting the dogs that leaped around and upon him, stopping to lift up a little negro baby that had toddled between his big legs and fallen, and, finally, standing to shake hands with Uncle Isaac, the patriarch of The Quarters. And as Uncle Isaac never—except after long absences—paid even "Master John" the honor of coming to meet him, Elizabeth wondered who the guest could be.

Coming down stairs she met Harriet in her very gayest head-kerchief and her white-embroidered apron and her best-company manner: "De minister a'n come, Miss Lizzie—de Rev. Mr. Rollins am 'rived; and de camp-meetin' will be 'ranged 'bout now. I'se powerful sorry you kaint stay, ma'am."

"Where does Mr. Rollins come from?"

"De Lord knows whar. He's at de Rio Grande, and den 'fore you can calc'late he's at de Colorado."

"He appears to be a great favorite."

"He's done got de hearts ob ebery one in his right hand; and de dogs! dey whimper after him for a week; and de little children! he draw dem to him from dar mammy's breast. Nobody's never seed sich a man!"

He was talking to John when Elizabeth went on the gallery, and Harry was standing between his knees, and Dick Millard leaning on his shoulder. Half a dozen of the more favored dogs were lying around him, and at least a dozen negro children were crawling up the piazza steps, or peeping through the railings. He was dressed in buckskin and blue flannel, and at first sight had a most unclerical look. But the moment he lifted his face Elizabeth saw what a clear, noble soul looked out from the small twinkling orbs beneath his large brows. And as he grew excited in the evening's conversation, his muscles nerved, his body straightened, and he became the wiry, knotted embodiment of calm power and determination.

"We expected you two weeks ago," said John to him.

"There was work laid out for me I hadn't calculated on, John. Bowie's men were hard up for fresh meat, and I lent them my rifle a few days. Then the Indians bothered me. They were hanging around

Saledo settlement in a way I didn't like, so I watched them until I was about sure of their next dirty trick. It happened to be a thieving one on the Zavala ranche, so I let Zavala know, and then rode on to tell Granger he'd better send a few boys to keep them red-handed Comanche from picking and stealing and murdering."

"It was just like you. You probably saved many lives."

"Saving life is often saving souls, John. Next time I go that way every man at Zavala's ranche and every man in Granger's camp will listen to me. I shall then have a greater danger than red men to tell them of. But they know both my rifle and my words are true, and when I say to them, 'Boys, there's hell and heaven right in your path, and your next step may plunge you into the fiery gulf, or open to you the golden gates,' they'll listen to me, and they'll believe me. John, it takes a soldier to preach to soldiers, and a saved sinner to know how to save other sinners."

"And if report is not unjust," said Richard, "you will find plenty of great sinners in such circuits as you take."

"Sir, you'll find sinners, great sinners, everywhere. I acknowledge that Texas has been made a kind of receptacle for men too wicked to live among their fellows. I often come upon these wild, carrion jail-birds. I know them a hundred yards off. It is a

great thing, every way, that they come here. God be thanked! Texas has nothing to fear from them. In the first place, though the atmosphere of crime is polluting in a large city, it infects nobody here. I tell you, sir, the murderer on a Texas prairie is miserable. There is nothing so terrible to him as this freedom and loneliness, in which he is always in the company of his outraged conscience, which drives him hither and thither, and gives him no rest. For I tell you, that murderers don't willingly meet together, not even over the whisky bottle. They know each other, and shun each other. Well, sir, this subject touches me warmly at present, for I am just come from the death-bed of such a man. I have been with him three days. You remember Bob Black, John?"

"Yes. A man who seldom spoke, and whom no one liked. A good soldier, though. I don't believe he knew the meaning of fear."

"Didn't he? I have seen him sweat with terror. He has come to me more dead than alive, clung to my arms like a child, begged me to stand between him and the shapes that followed him."

"Drunk?"

"No, sir. I don't think he ever tasted liquor; but he was a haunted man! He had been a sixfold murderer, and his victims made life a terror to him."

"How do you account for that?"

"We have a spiritual body, and we have a natural

body. When it pleases the Almighty, he opens the eyes and ears of our spiritual body, either for comfort, or advice, or punishment. This criminal saw things and heard words no mortal eyes have perceived, nor mortal ears understood. The man was haunted. I cannot doubt it."

"I believe what you say," said Elizabeth, solemnly, "for I have heard, and I have seen."

"And so have I," said the preacher, in a kind of rapture. "When I lay sleeping on the St. Mark's one night, I felt the thrill of a mighty touch, and I heard, with my spiritual ears, words which no mortal lips uttered; and I rose swiftly, and saved my life from the Comanche by the skin of my teeth. And another night, as I rode over the Maverick prairie, when it was knee-deep in grass and flowers, and the stars were gathering one by one with a holy air into the house of God, I could not restrain myself, and I sang aloud for joy! Then, suddenly, there seemed to be all around me a happy company, and my spiritual ears were opened, and I heard a melody beyond the voices of earth, and I was not ashamed in it of my little human note of praise. I tell you, death only sets us face to face with Him who is not very far from us at any time."

"And Bob is dead?"

"Yes; and I believe he is saved."

No one spoke; and the preacher, after a minute's silence, asked, "Who doubts?"

CHAPTER XI.

"The evening of life brings with it its lamp."—TOUBERT.

"And there arrives a lull in the hot race:
And an unwonted calm pervades the breast.
And then he thinks he knows
The hills where his life rose,
And the sea, where it goes."—ARNOLD.

"She has passed
To where, beyond these voices, there is peace."

IT is the greatest folly to think that the only time worth writing about is youth. It is an equal folly to imagine that love is the only passion universally interesting. Elizabeth's years were no less vivid, no less full of feeling and of changes, after her marriage than before it. Indeed, she never quite lost the interests of her maiden life. Hallam demanded an oversight she did not fail to give it. Three times during the twelve years of its confiscation to Antony's creditors she visited it. In these visits she was accompanied by Richard, and Harry, and her own children. Then the Whaleys' accounts were carefully gone over, and found always to be perfectly honorable and satisfactory. And it is needless to say how happy Martha was at such times.

Gradually all ill-feeling passed away. The young squire, though educated abroad, had just such a train-

ing as made him popular. For he passed part of every year in Texas with Dick Millard, and all that could be known about horses and hunting and woodcraft, Harry Hallam knew. He had also taken on very easily the Texan manner, frank, yet rather proud and phlegmatic: "Evidently a young man who knows what he wants, and will be apt to get it," said Whaley.

"Nine Yorkshire jockeys knocked into one couldn't blind him on a horse," said young Horton.

"And I'll lay a guinea he'll lead in every hunting field."

"And they do say, he's a first-rate scholar besides."

Such conversations regarding him were indefinitely repeated, and varied.

When he was in his eighteenth year the estate was absolutely free of every claim, and in a condition which reflected the greatest credit upon those in whose care it had been placed. It was at this time that Richard and Elizabeth took the young man into his grandfather's room, and laid before him the title deeds of his patrimony and the schedule of its various incomes. Then, also, they told him, with infinite kindness and forbearance, the story of his father's efforts and failures, and the manner in which the estate had been handled, so that it might have been made over to him free of all debt and stain.

Harry said very little. His adopted parents liked him the better for that. But he was profoundly

amazed and grateful. Then he went to Cambridge, and for three years Elizabeth did not see him. It had been arranged, however, that the whole family should meet at Hallam on the anniversary of his majority, and the occurrence was celebrated with every public festivity that had always attended that event in the Hallam family. There was nothing to dim the occasion. Every one, far and near, took the opportunity to show that ill-thoughts and ill-feelings were forever buried, and Elizabeth and Richard were feted with especial honor.

"Few women would hev done so well by t' land and t' family," admitted even Lord Eltham, "and if I wasn't so old and feeble, I'd go and tell her so; and to be foreign-born, that Mr. Fontaine has been varry square, that he hes. He shows t' English blood in him."

"Ay, it's hard to wear Yorkshire out. It bears a deal o' waterin', and is still strong and straight-for'ard," answered Whaley.

"Now he'll hev to wed and settle down."

"He'll do that. I've seen a deal o' him, and I've noticed that he has neither eyes nor ears but for our little lass, a varry bonny lass she is!"

"It 'll be Alice Horton, happen?"

"Nay, it isn't. It's his cousin, Bessie Fontaine. She's but a girl yet, but she's t' varry image o' her mother, just what Elizabeth Hallam was at sixteen—happen only a bit slighter and more delicate-looking."

“And no wonder, Whaley. To be brought up i’ a place like that New Orleans. Wyh-a! they do say that t’ winter weather there is like our haymakin’ time! Poor thing! She’ll get a bit o’ color here, I’s’e warrant.”

The Yorkshire lawyer had seen even into a love affair with clear eyes. Bessie and Harry had already confided their affection to Elizabeth, but she was quite determined that there should be no engagement until after Harry returned from a three-years’ travel in Europe and Asia.

“Then, Harry,” she said, “you will have seen the women of many lands. And Bessie will also have seen something of the world, and of the society around her. She must choose you from among all others, and not simply because habit and contiguity and family relations have thrown you together.”

Still it pleased her, that from every part of the world came regularly and constantly letters and tokens of Harry’s love for her daughter. She would not force, she would not even desire, such a consummation; but yet, if a true and tried affection should unite the cousins, it would be a wonderful settlement of that succession which had so troubled and perplexed her father, and which at last he had humbly left to the wisdom and direction of a higher Power.

Therefore, when Harry, in his twenty-fourth year, browned and bearded with much travel, came back to

New Orleans, to ask the hand of the only woman he had ever loved, Elizabeth was very happy. Her daughter was going back to her old home, going to be the mistress of its fair sunny rooms, and renew in her young life the hopes and memories of a by-gone generation.

And to the happy bridal came John and Phyllis, and all their handsome sons and daughters, and never was there a more sweetly, solemn marriage-feast. For many wise thoughts had come to Elizabeth as her children grew up at her side, and one of them was a conviction that marriage is too sacred a thing to be entered into amid laughter and dancing and thoughtless feasting. "If Jesus was asked to the marriage, as he was in Cana of Galilee, there would be fewer unhappy marriages," she said. So the young bride was sent away with smiles and kisses and loving joyful wishes, but not in a whirl of dancing and champagne gayety and noisy selfish merriment.

And the years came and went, and none of them were alike. In one, it was the marriage of her eldest son, Richard, to Lulu Millard; in another, the death of a baby girl very dear to her. She had her daily crosses and her daily blessings, and her daily portion of duties. But in the main, it may be said, for Richard and Elizabeth Fontaine, that they had "borne the yoke in their youth," and learned the great lessons of life, before the days came in which their strength began to fail them.

The last year of any life may generally be taken as the verdict upon that life. Elizabeth's was a very happy one. She was one of those women on whom time lays a consecrating hand. Her beauty, in one sense, had gone; in another sense, she was fairer than ever. Her noble face had lost its bloom and its fine contour, but her mouth was sweeter and stronger, and her eyes full of the light of a soul standing in the promise of heaven. She had much of her old energy and activity. In the spring of the year she went to Texas to see a son and daughter who had settled there; and, with one of her grandchildren, rode thoughtfully, but not unhappily, over all the pleasant places she had been with Richard that first happy year of their marriage. Richard had been six years dead, but she had never mourned him as those mourn who part hands in mid-life, when the way is still long before the lonely heart. In a short time they would meet again, for

“ As the pale waste widens around us,
And the banks fade dimmer away,
As the stars come out, the night wind
Brings up the stream
Murmurs and scents of the infinite sea.”

Yet there had been a very solemn parting between her and Phyllis; and when Phyllis stooped twice to the face in the departing carriage, and the two women kissed each other so silently, John was somehow touched into an unusual thoughtfulness; and for the

first time realized that his sweet Phyllis was fading away. He could not talk in his usual cheery manner, and when he said, "Farewell, Elizabeth," and held her hand, he involuntarily glanced at his wife, and walked away with his eyes full of tears.

But as the brain grows by knowledge, so the heart is made larger by loving; and Elizabeth was rich and happy in the treasures she had garnered. The past no prayer could bring back; the future she counted not; but she enjoyed in every hour the blessing they brought her. The voyage across the ocean was delightful; she found young hearts to counsel, and aged ones to change experiences with. Every one desired to talk to her, and counted it a favor to sit or to walk by her side. So beautiful is true piety; so lovely is the soul that comes into daily life fresh from the presence of the Deity.

She had left Texas in May; she arrived at Hallam in June. And how beautiful the dear old place was! But Martha had gone to her reward two years previously, and Elizabeth missed her. She had lived to be eighty-eight years old, and had not so much died as fallen asleep. She had never left the hall, but, as long as she was able, had taken charge of all its treasures and of every thing concerning the children. Even when confined to her room, they had come to her with their troubles and their joys, and her fingers were busy for them unto the last day.

Yet no one missed Martha as Elizabeth missed her.

With Martha she talked on subjects she mentioned to no one else. They had confidences no others could share. It seemed as if the last link which bound her to her youth was broken. But one morning, as her daughter was slowly driving her through Hallam village, she saw an old man who had been very pleasantly linked with the by-gone years, and she said, "That is a very dear friend, I must speak to him, Bessie."

He was a slight old man, with thin hair white as wool falling on his shoulders, and a face full of calm contemplation. "Mr. North," said Elizabeth, tremulously, "do you remember me?"

He removed his hat, and looked attentively in the face bending toward him. Then, with a smile, "Ah, yes, I remember Miss Hallam. God is good to let me see you again. I am very glad, indeed."

"You must come to the hall with me, if you can; I have a great deal to say to you."

And thus it happened that after this meeting Bessie frequently stopped for him in the village, and that gradually he spent more and more time at the hall. There he always occupied the large room called the "Chamber of Peace," hallowed by the memory of the apostle of his faith.

One hot August day he had gone to its cool, calm shelter, after spending an hour with Elizabeth. Their conversation had been in heaven, and specially of the early dead and blessed, who went in the serenity of

the morning; whose love for God had known no treachery, and who took the hand of Jesus and followed him with all their heart.

"I think theirs will be the radiant habitations, and the swift obedience of the seraphim. They will know and love and work, as do the angels."

"In middle life," said Elizabeth, "heaven seems farther away from us."

"True, my sister. At midday the workman may think of the evening, but it is his work that chiefly engrosses him. Not that the Christian ever forgets God in his labor, but he needs to be on the alert, and to keep every faculty busy. But when the shades of evening gather, he begins to think of going home, and of the result of his labor."

"In middle life, too, death amazes us. In the moment of hearing of such a death I always found my heart protest against it. But as I grow older I can feel that all the cords binding to life grow slack. How will it be at the end?"

"I think as soon as heaven is seen, we shall tend toward it. We will not go away in sadness, dear sister; we shall depart in the joy of his salvation. If I was by your side, I should not say, "Farewell;" I should speak of our meeting again."

Then he went away, and Elizabeth, with a happy face, drew her chair to the open window of her room and lifted her work. It was a piece of silken patch-work, made of dresses and scarfs and sashes,

that each had a history in her memory. There were circles from Phyllis's and her own wedding dresses, one from a baby sash of her son Charles. Charles hung his sword from a captain's belt then, but she kept the blue ribbon of his babyhood. There was a bit from Jack's first cravat, and Dick's flag, and her dear husband's wedding vest, and from the small silken shoes of the little Maya—dear little Maya, who

"From the nursery door,
Climbed up with clay cold feet
Unto the golden floor."

Any wife and mother can imagine the thousand silken strips that would gather in a life of love.

She had often said that in her old age she would sew together these memorials of her sorrow and her joy; and Bessie frequently stood beside her, listening to events which this or that piece called forth, and watching the gay beautiful squares, as they grew in the summer sunshine and by the glinting winter firelight.

After Mr. North left her she lifted her work and sat sewing and singing. It was an unusually hot day; the perfume from the August lilies and the lavender and the rich carnations almost made the heart faint. All the birds were still; but the bees were busy, and far off there was the soft tinkling of the water falling into the two fountains on the terrace. Harry came in, and said, "I am going into Hallam, mother, so I kiss you before I go;" and she rose up

and kissed the handsome fellow, and watched him away, and when he turned and lifted his hat to her, she blessed him, and thanked God that he had let her live to see Antony's son so good and worthy an inheritor of the old name and place.

By and by her thoughts drifted westward to her son Charles, with his regiment on the Colorado plains, to her son Richard in his Texan home, to Phyllis and John, to her daughter Netta, to the graves of Richard and the little Maya. It seemed to her as if all her work was finished. How wonderfully the wrong had been put right! How worthy Harry was! How happy her own dear Bessie! If her father could see the home he had left with anxious fears, she thought he would be satisfied. "I shall be glad to see him," she said, softly; "he will say to me, 'Thou did right, Elizabeth!' I think that his praise will be sweet, even after the Master's."

At this point in her reflections Bessie came into her room. She had her arms full of myrtles and glowing dahlias, of every color; and she stooped and kissed her mother, and praised the beauty of her work, and then began to arrange the flowers in the large vases which stood upon the hearth and upon the table.

"It is a most beautiful day, mother! a most beautiful world! I wonder why God says he will make a new world! How can a new one be fairer?"

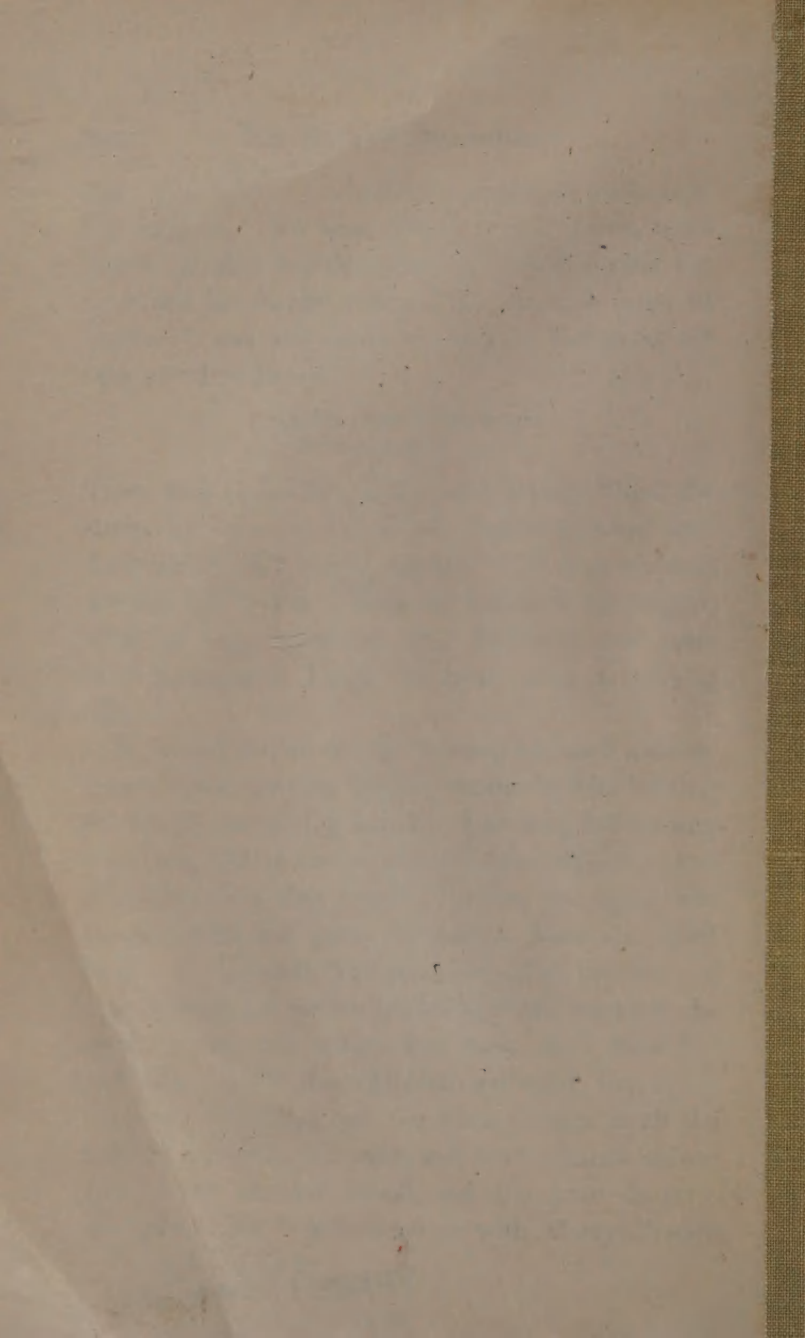
"His tabernacle will be in it, Bessie. Think of

that, my child. An intimate happiness with him. No more sin. All tears wiped away. Bessie, there may be grander worlds among the countless stars, but O earth! fair happy earth, that has such hope of heaven!" and she began to sing to the sweet old tune of "Immanuel,"

"There is a land of pure delight,
Where saints——"

There was a sudden pause, and Bessie lifted the strain, but ere the verse was finished, turned suddenly and looked at her mother. The next moment she was at her side. With the needle in her fingers, with the song upon her lips, Elizabeth had gone to "Immanuel's Land," without even a parting sigh.

It seemed almost wrong to weep for such a death. Bessie knelt praying by her mother's side, holding her hands, and gazing into the dear face, fast settling into those solemn curves which death makes firm and sharp-cut, as if they were to endure for ages, until the transition was quite complete. Then she called in the old servants who most loved her mother, and they dressed her for her burial, and laid her upon the small, snowy bed which had been hers from her girlhood. And the children gathered the white odorous everlastings and the white flowers in all the garden, and with soft steps and tender hands spread them over the still breast, and the pure drapery. And when Mr. North came in with Harry, though



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